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A Unit Lesson Plan for High School Psychology Teachers

Social Psychology

TOPSS

American Psychological Association

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This Unit Lesson Plan aligns with the following Content Standards in the Variations in Individual and Group Behavior Domain of the *National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula* (APA, 2005):

VC-1. Social judgment and attitudes
VC-2. Social and cultural categories
VC-3. Social influence and relationships

Reference

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to one of the most exciting areas of psychology to teach! Social psychology is defined as the scientific study of how individuals' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by others (Breckler, Olson, & Wiggins, 2006). Social psychology, more so than any other area of psychology, allows us to understand individual behavior, group dynamics, and the social forces that shape attitudes and behaviors across time and settings. This unit lesson plan is designed to provide you with core knowledge in social psychology.

Included as well are resources to invigorate your classroom experience. Each lesson in the unit includes core concepts, examples of each concept, activities to provoke critical thinking, and teaching resources to supplement your lectures and the textbook.

The material presented in this unit lesson plan provides the impetus for stimulating the minds of your students. It is also food for thought to assist adolescents in thinking about themselves, their families, peers, community, and the world at large. This material will also assist your students in understanding that they can change the world in which they live. It also explains the role of culture in influencing individual and group behavior.

This lesson plan offers high school students numerous glances at their own behavior, thereby increasing chances of changing their attitudes and behaviors toward individuals and members of society at large. At an immediate level, the content can help them think about how they can change the culture of their schools (e.g., curtailing violence, helping rejected children, minimizing aggression, etc). Students need to develop the social and cognitive skills that will assist them in navigating their world and the adult world that is ahead.

Teachers are strongly encouraged to incorporate materials that stretch students' minds and encourage them to see the relationship between these concepts and their actions. This material can be used across the curriculum to heighten awareness and understanding regarding human behavior.

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Breckler, S. J., Olson, J. M., and Wiggins, E. C. (2006). *Social psychology alive.* Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth Publishers.

Content Outline

Lesson 1. Social Cognition

I. Social Cognition

A. Definition—*Social cognition* is the study of how information about people is processed and stored. Our thoughts, perceptions, and beliefs about people are influenced by the social context in which we interact with people.

B. Social cognition meets our needs to accurately perceive the world around us and to perceive ourselves in a positive light.

II. Person Perception

A. *Social schemas* are mental representations that influence how we perceive others. Schemas are also known as *concepts*.

1. Schemas influence how information is processed and how we interpret information. We pay more attention to people who portray characteristics that are consistent with our schemas or ideas about how people should behave in a public setting.

   Example—We tend to listen more intently to a presentation given by a person who is professionally dressed and who demonstrates expertise on a topic. We tend to pay less attention to a presentation given by a person who is dressed nonprofessionally and who does not appear to be knowledgeable about a given topic.

2. Schemas influence what we remember because we attend to (see and hear) things that are consistent with our current schemas.

3. This top-down processing helps us quickly respond to people we encounter, but it can also lead to errors in judging others that result in narrow mindedness and even prejudice.

   Example—We might assume that students who have learning disabilities cannot be gifted students as well. There is an inherent tendency to view students with learning disabilities as less intelligent than students who do not have learning disabilities.

B. A *script* is an expectation about how a certain event or situation should unfold.

Example—Following a successful job interview, an applicant expects to receive a telephone call requesting a second interview or a job offer.

C. A *self-fulfilling prophecy* occurs when our expectations cause us unconsciously to act in a manner to bring about behaviors that confirm our expectations.

1. Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968)—Teachers were told that certain elementary school students would bloom (have rapid academic growth). At the end

of the academic school year, the randomly chosen bloomers showed significantly greater gains in I.Q. than their control-group classmates. Teacher expectancies about the children directly influenced student performance on I.Q. tests (unconsciously, the teachers tended to use a larger vocabulary with and provide more stimulation to the bloomers).

2. Another example of a self-fulfilling prophecy is that teachers who have high expectations of their students will often have students who work diligently to live up to those high expectations.

3. A self-fulfilling prophecy, at the unconscious level, can influence personal outcomes.

   Example—The student who believes he/she cannot pass a test will not study as hard as needed, thereby confirming that he/she was "right."

III. The Attribution Process

This process involves how we explain the causes of behavior (both our own behavior and the behavior of others).

A. Internal (personal) versus external (situational) attributions are described as follows:

1. *Internal (personal) attributions* explain an outcome by looking within an individual.

   Examples—"I was able to accomplish my goal because I was able to break the larger goal into mini-goals that I could manage." "I performed well on a test because I studied hard for the examination."

2. *External (situational) attributions* (e.g., fate, luck, chance) explain an outcome by looking outside of an individual.

   Examples—"I was unable to accomplish my goal because I had to help a family member who needed my assistance." "I did not perform well on the examination because the teacher did not tell us what to study."

B. Certain factors determine the type of attribution made, according to Kelley's covariation model (Kelley, 1967, 1973).

1. *Distinctiveness* or uniqueness of response is the extent to which similar stimuli lead to the same behavior of a person.

   Example—Jeremy is argumentative (behavior) with his parents (stimuli) but not with his siblings. (This would be an example of high distinctiveness.)

2. *Consensus* of response across people is the extent to which other people's behavior is similar to that of a particular person.

   Example—Jeremy is the only one of his siblings who argues with his parents. (This would be an example of low consensus.)

3. *Consistency* of response over time is the extent to which a behavior occurs repeatedly in a particular situation.

   Example—Jeremy always argues with his parents. (This would be an example of high consistency.)

Low consensus + high consistency = Internal attribution

If few others agree with the individual, and he demonstrates this behavior over and over again, even in different settings, we would be more likely to say that it is his disposition contributing to his behavior rather than the situation.

Example—If Andy is playing tennis and is not having a good game, he may throw a temper tantrum. If only a few people behave this way while playing tennis, but Andy does in every game in which he becomes frustrated, we are more likely to attribute Andy's behavior to his hot temper.

High consensus + high consistency = External attribution

If others agree with the individual, and the individual exhibits this behavior often, even in different settings, we would most likely say that the situation is determining the individual's behavior.

Example—If most people exhibit temper tantrums when they are frustrated while playing tennis, and Andy does as well on a regular basis, we would more likely attribute Andy's temper tantrums to a frustrating tennis match than to Andy's disposition.

High consensus + high distinctiveness = External attribution

If most people agree with the individual's behavior, and the behavior is highly unusual for the individual, then we would most likely attribute the behavior to the situation.

Example—If most people throw temper tantrums when they are having a frustrating tennis game, and Andy rarely throws temper tantrums, we would more likely attribute Andy's temper tantrum to a really intense tennis game rather than to his disposition.

C. Biases in the attributional process

1. The *fundamental attribution* error (also known as the *correspondence bias*) is overestimating internal (personal) influences and underestimating external (situational) influences when judging the behavior of others: "He's poor because he's lazy." This is more likely to happen when we do not know the person well.

   See Activity 1.1
   The Fundamental Attribution Error

2. *Actor-observer bias* is attributing one's own behavior to external (situational) causes and the behavior of others to internal (personal) factors. "I was unprepared for the exam because there was a family emergency last night, but Sally was unprepared because she's basically not that good at math."

3. *Self-serving bias* is the tendency to attribute success to internal (personal) factors and failures to external (situational) factors. "I won the game today because I am a great athlete; yesterday I lost the game because the referee made some bad calls.

4. The *just world hypothesis* is the tendency to believe that good people are rewarded, and bad people are punished. It can lead to the blaming-the-victim effect. “She deserved to be assaulted because she wore revealing clothes.”

See Activity 1.2
Belief in a Just World and Blaming the Victim

5. *False consensus effect* is the tendency to think other people share our attitudes more than they actually do. “I really like this one television show, so I assume most of my peers like it as well.”

D. Cognitive heuristics that influence social cognition include the following:

1. The *representative heuristic* is the tendency to judge the membership of a person or object based on how closely the person or object fits the prototype of a given category. This can be seen in cases in which we think that individuals who dress in a certain manner are part of a particular group. If we see individuals dressed in athletic apparel, we assume that they are friends with all of the athletes. Another example is if we see a person wearing a white lab coat, we assume that this person works in lab or a hospital. However, the person might sell make-up for a local department store. While representative heuristics may lead to the correct conclusion, they may also be misleading and can lead to stereotyping.

2. The *gambler’s fallacy* is a term for when people believe that future events are influenced by past occurrences. If a dime was tossed in the air and landed on heads the last 10 times in a row, a person will assume that the next toss will lead to the dime’s landing on tails. The truth is that the chance of this occurring is still 50%. This phenomenon is often seen among individuals who have lost many times while gambling and assume that they “must win” the next time they gamble. They tend to forget that the odds of winning have not changed. This also operates on a variable ratio schedule by reinforcing the individual periodically, so the individual is more likely to continue with the behavior.

3. The *availability heuristic* is the tendency to judge the probability of an event’s occurring based on how readily examples come to mind. Following the tragedies of September 11, 2001, many people were afraid to fly, when, in fact, increased security at airports actually made it safer to fly (and, in fact, flying was safer than driving even before 9/11). If a person is home alone and watches a scary movie, the person might think that he/she is in danger of having an intruder break into their home, when the chances have not changed at all from what they were before watching the film.

4. *Hindsight bias* is the tendency to overestimate how predictable an event was once the outcome is known. Following elections, people might comment that the results were predictable, discounting that the results were actually not so predictable in the weeks leading up to the election.

E. *Counterfactual thinking* is when people have thoughts on how past events might have turned out differently. For example, a person thinks about how life would be different if he or she had not ended a past relationship. Counterfactual thinking can be adaptive if it can improve future behavior. For example, a teenager who receives a speeding ticket may wish he/she had not been speeding, which may influence the teenager’s future driving behavior.

Lesson 2. Group Processes

I. Group Dynamics

Group dynamics is an area of social psychology that studies groups and group processes. A *group* is defined as two or more people who are interacting with and/or influencing one another.

II. Common Group Processes

A. *Social facilitation*—The mere presence of others can improve performance on well-practiced tasks (e.g., Ryan, a pool player, should perform better in front of a large crowd than while practicing his billiard moves alone).

Social inhibition—The mere presence of others can impair performance on tasks that one is not particularly good at (e.g., a novice pool player will perform less well in front of a group).

B. Both social facilitation and social inhibition can be explained by arousal. Arousal enhances performance for well-learned or familiar behaviors and hurts performance for difficult or unfamiliar tasks.

C. *Social loafing*—On group tasks, people will sometimes exert less effort if individual contributions are not possible to identify (e.g., when working on a group project for class, only a few people from the group will do the majority of the task).

Men are more likely to exhibit social loafing than women, and people from individualistic countries are more likely to exhibit this behavior compared to people from collectivistic countries. (See Lesson 4 for more information about individualistic and collectivistic countries.)

D. The *bystander effect* claims that behavior is influenced by the number of people available to intervene.

Example—In 1964 Kitty Genovese was stabbed to death in front of her apartment in New York City at 2:30 a.m. Her murder was overheard by 34 of her neighbors, yet none of them came to her aid.

1. *Diffusion of responsibility* is the tendency for individuals to think others will help, so they do not intervene.

   Example—If two students are walking down the hallway at school, and a pen falls out of one student's pocket or backpack, the other student is more likely to tell the first student that he or she dropped something when the two students are alone in the hallway. If the hallway is crowded with people and a pen falls out of a student's pocket or backpack, the same other student may think others will help, and, therefore, he or she may not say anything.

2. *Pluralistic ignorance* is the tendency to do nothing because others are doing nothing; everyone assumes everyone else must "know better," and if others do not respond, then there must not be an emergency (Darley & Latané, 1968).

Example—An alarm is sounding and no one is moving. A person assumes that there is no real threat because everyone else is acting as if things are normal.

E. *Deindividuation* is giving up normal behavioral restraints to the group. Being less self-conscious and restrained in a group situation may account for mob behavior (e.g., students at pep assemblies are more likely to behave badly at the assembly if they cannot be identified individually for their behavior). Deindividuation may account for much fan behavior (good and bad) at sports games (painting faces, screaming insults, and so on).

See Activity 2.1
Deindividuated: What Would You Do?

1. Prison environments can lead to deindividuation, as demonstrated in Zimbardo's 1972 study at Stanford University. Male college student volunteers were assigned to either guard or prisoner roles and given appropriate uniforms and rules to follow. The simulation was ended in just 6 days after guard–prisoner interactions became increasingly aggressive. The deindividuation in the prison setting seemed to produce cruel and unacceptable guard behavior toward prisoners. This process may also explain the behavior of some Army personnel toward prisoners at Abu Ghraib (Baghdad).

2. Three perspectives suggest how deindividuation affects behavior (Breckler, Olson, & Wiggins, 2006):

   (a) Deindividuation lessens a person's inhibitions against engaging in harmful actions.

   (b) Deindividuation increases a person's responsiveness to external cues.

   (c) Deindividuation increases a person's observance to group norms.

F. *Groupthink* is a mode of thinking that occurs when the desire for unanimity in a decision-making group overrides a realistic appraisal of alternative courses of action. This mode of thinking can result in bad group decisions when, rather than defend their own ideas, individual group members simply go along with the group.

Conditions that increase the likelihood of groupthink include the following:

1. The group is highly cohesive.

2. There is a distinct and directive leader.

3. The group is isolated from other influences.

4. There is time pressure or intense stress.

5. The leader already has his or her mind made up.

6. *Examples*

   (a) Challenger explosion—Although there were signs that the spaceship was not functioning properly, no member of NASA stood up to prevent the launching of the spaceship.

(b) A popular student at school declares that he/she is going to have an impromptu protest about "unreasonable" school rules. Other students need to decide quickly if they will join the protest. Rather than think through the relatively unsound reasoning behind the decision to protest, other students decide to join the protest.

(c) A group of students decides it would be fun to car surf. So, with the encouragement of all involved, one student climbs to the roof of a car and assumes the surfer position on the slowly moving car. Unfortunately, when the car stops, the surfer slides forward over the hood of the car and is seriously injured. No one in the group had considered the possible danger of their decision.

G. Majority and minority influence

1. *Group polarization* occurs when a group supports a decision supported by the majority of the group following a group discussion.

2. *Minority influence* occurs when a confident and persistent minority group influences a decision made by a whole group.

Lesson 3. Cooperation, Competition, and Conflict

I. Cooperation Versus Competition

A. *Cooperation* involves people working together to reach a goal.

Example—Individuals from around the country came together after Hurricane Katrina to offer help.

B. *Competition* involves working toward a goal while denying access to that goal to others. Competition can be between individuals or groups.

Examples—An election for class president or a class competing for the homecoming most-spirited class award

See Activity 3.1
Cooperation and Competition

II. Social Dilemmas

A. Definition—Individual or group behavior that leads to a short-term gain for the individual or group can lead to disaster for all if everyone (or all groups) were to engage in the same behavior.

B. *Prisoner's dilemma game*—Two people are separated immediately after being arrested for a serious crime. They are believed to be guilty, but the evidence to convict them is lacking. Each prisoner can confess or not confess to committing the crime. If neither prisoner confesses, each will be given a lesser punishment (1 year in jail). If both prisoners confess, each will each receive a moderate sentence

(5 years in jail). If one prisoner confesses and the other prisoner does not, the prisoner who confesses will go free and the other will receive a more severe sentence (10 years in jail). The best mutual outcome is for both prisoners to cooperate, but there is a strong tendency for people to compete rather than to work toward a mutually beneficial goal.

See Activity 3.2
Cooperation Versus Competition: Will You Choose to Compete?

C. *Commons dilemma*—When individuals share a common resource they all want and there is a scarcity of that resource (or the perception of a scarcity of that resource), individuals sometimes take more than their fair share and use the resource up quickly.

1. *Example*—If there are five people in a family and the mother buys a box of 20 cookies, each person should get 4 cookies. However, there is a tendency for someone in the family to take more than his or her fair share of the cookies.

2. *More examples*—(1) When there is a gas shortage, there is a tendency for some people to use more gasoline than others. (2) There is also a tendency for people to not recycle solid waste when they can do so. Finally, (3) many companies are not environmentally friendly. They have a tendency to pollute the rivers more than companies that have an environmental policy that places limits on their impact on the environment.

D. Social dilemmas reflect inherent conflicts between an individual and others (or a group and other groups) and between short-term and long-term interests (e.g., it may be easiest in the short term to throw away your recyclable soda can in the garbage, but if everyone chose this behavior, it would be poor in the long term for all).

III. Interpersonal Conflict

A. Definition—An *interpersonal conflict* occurs if a person believes that another stands in the way of something of value.

B. Causes

1. Competition for scarce resources

   Example—Parents trying to buy the most popular toys (e.g., a Playstation) for their children during the holidays compete to find and buy the toy.

2. Revenge

   People reciprocate negative actions (e.g., if Sally makes fun of Sue, Sue may plot and plan a way to embarrass Sally).

3. Attribution of selfish or unfriendly motives to others

   This is the tendency of a person to use personal, dispositional attributions rather than situational explanations (e.g., a person bumps into you by accident and you assume they were being rude).

4. Misperceived or faulty communication or misperceptions

   This is, for example, when a person takes an innocent comment as a criticism.

IV. Managing Conflict

A. *Bargaining* is the term used when each side offers and counteroffers until a mutually agreeable solution is found.

Examples—Negotiating to buy a house or negotiating worker contract disputes.

B. *Third-party interventions* take place when an outside, objective source helps find a workable solution.

Examples—When a mediator works with a divorcing couple or a peer helper works with peers.

C. *Superordinate goals* are shared goals that can only be achieved through cooperation.

1. Sherif (1966) found in his Robber's Cave study that when boys at a camp were given superordinate goals to accomplish, competition and biases decreased. The 22 boys had originally been assigned to different groups, initially causing competition between the groups. When both groups had to work together, biases decreased.

2. *Example*—National security overrode partisan politics in the weeks after September 11, 2001.

D. Communication and trust underlie these methods of reducing conflict.

Lesson 4. Attitude Formation and Change; Conformity, Obedience, and Prosocial Behavior

I. Attitudes

Attitudes are evaluative (i.e., positive or negative) judgments about people, objects, events, and thoughts.

Attitudes can be formed through learning and exposure.

A. Attitudes serve two functions: to enable us to rapidly evaluate objects as good or bad (the *object appraisal function* of attitudes) and to express values and convey a person's identity (the *value-expressive function* of attitudes).

B. Attitudes are often measured using self-report techniques, such as a Likert-type scale, which measure the extent to which an individual agrees or disagrees with statements. Another example of a self-report technique is an opinion survey, used to assess public opinions. Nonverbal techniques to measure attitudes include behavioral measures, which often unobtrusively record behaviors.

II. The ABCs of Attitudes

A. Components of Attitudes
A for affective (emotional) component,
B for behavioral (action) component, and
C for cognitive (belief) component.

B. *Example*—Attitude toward pizza:

Affective: "I love pizza. It tastes good."
Behavioral: "I eat pizza five times per week. I even work at a Italian restaurant."
Cognitive: "I believe pizza is healthy for me because it has all of the important food groups."

C. Attitudes can be *explicit* (attitudes that can be reported consciously) or *implicit* (attitudes that are automatic responses, possibly unconscious).

III. Attitude–Behavior Link

A. Attitudes and behaviors have a dual relationship (Breckler, Olson, & Wiggins, 2006). Our current attitudes are influenced by past behaviors, and yet our future behavior is predicted by our current attitudes. Attitudes often guide rational choices we make (we believe dirt is bad so we wash dirty clothes), and attitudes can also influence what we pay attention to in the world around us and therefore affect our behavior (if we believe driving safely is important, we will look for speed signs and stay within the speed limit).

Attitudes often influence behaviors. Examples of attitudes affecting behavior: Negative attitudes toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered individuals may lead to discriminatory behaviors (such as banning them from the military). Police profiling of certain racial and ethnic groups is another example of attitudes leading to behavior.

B. Attitudes tend to predict behaviors when the attitude is strong (e.g., if we strongly support one presidential candidate, we may volunteer on his or her campaign). Attitudes also predict behaviors when we are free to behave in a variety of ways, as opposed to when we have limited options (e.g., if we enjoy tennis, we may play tennis over summer vacation).

C. There has been much research on the attitude-behavior link since the 1930s, when LaPiere (1934) found that attitudes are not always good indicators of how people will behave in a given situation.

LaPiere's study compared a general attitude with a specific behavior. For more reliable correlations, general attitudes should be matched to general behaviors (or, specific attitudes should be matched to specific behaviors).

IV. Understanding Attitudes

A. *Elaboration likelihood model*—There are two routes of persuasion.

1. *Central route*—Attitude change involves carefully processing a message's content. The message is important (strength of arguments). This route usually requires motivation and ability to process (*systematic processing*).

Example—To make a well-informed decision about what college to attend, a person would talk to a number of persons and investigate all sorts of information (e.g., class size, tuition, mileage from home, course offerings, and so on). The person would carefully consider all of these factors before making a decision to attend a particular college.

2. *Peripheral route*—This route devotes little attention to the actual content of the message and tends to be affected by persuasion cues such as confidence, attractiveness, or other characteristics of the person delivering the message as important (*heuristic processing*).

   Example—Jessica Simpson endorsing a beauty product (e.g., an acne solution): People would purchase this product because a celebrity endorses it, not necessarily because it is an effective product.

3. The elaboration likelihood model predicts that central route processing will occur only when the individual is motivated to analyze the message and is also able to process the message. This route is likely when the message is personally relevant to the individual (see college example above). When the message is complex, individuals tend to use peripheral route processing.

B. The *cognitive dissonance theory* was proposed by Leon Festinger in 1957. Cognitive dissonance is the tension resulting from the lack of consistency in a person's attitudes or beliefs and behaviors. *Consonant cognitions* are consistent with one another ("Recycling is good for the environment" and "I have a recycling bin at home"); but *dissonant cognitions* are inconsistent ("Recycling is good for the environment" and "I never recycle plastic bottles"). Cognitive dissonance generally occurs when the ABCs of attitudes are inconsistent. Dissonance causes *aversive arousal,* which Festinger thought we are motivated to reduce. We often bring our attitudes in line with our actions, when we are aware that our attitudes and actions don't coincide. In other words we rationalize our behaviors. Dissonance can also be reduced by reducing the importance of the dissonant cognitions.

1. Festinger & Carlsmith (1959)—Students were given either $1 or $20 to tell another group of students that a very boring task was interesting. Those in the $1 group experienced more cognitive dissonance than those in the $20 group because $1 was not a justifiable reason to lie. When asked to rate how enjoyable the task was, the $1 group rated the task as more enjoyable (to reduce the dissonance; the $1 group had to reevaluate the task).

2. A more unusual example—Zimbardo, Weisenberg, & Firestone (1965) found that persons who ate a fried grasshopper for an experimenter who was rude and unlikable were more likely to see grasshoppers as an acceptable food than persons who ate a grasshopper for experimenters who were likable and polite. However, it should be noted that none of the participants liked eating grasshoppers. Zimbardo and his colleagues were able to use an induced compliance paradigm to create cognitive dissonance between the thoughts "grasshoppers are unacceptable foods to eat" and "I ate a grasshopper." Fifty percent of the participants in both experimental conditions ate the grasshopper.

3. More recent research has been conducted on cognitive dissonance theory (see Gibbons, Eggleston, & Benthin, 1997; Harmon-Jones & Mills, 1999).

C. *Self-perception theory*—Bem (1972) said people infer their attitudes from their behavior. This is most likely to happen when our internal attitudes are weak or ambiguous.

1. *Example*—A man may attend a comedy club and be unsure if the comedian is offensive or funny. He will then reflect upon his behavior during the performance to evaluate and create an opinion (if he is laughing, he will infer that the comedian is funny).

2. *Example*—If a student joins a socially active committee, he or she may consider himself or herself to be a good citizen.

V. Conformity

Conformity is following a group's standards, methods, or behavior as a result of unspoken group pressure, real or imagined (e.g., everyone else is wearing the Lance Armstrong armbands, so you do too).

A. In a classic study by Solomon Asch (1956) (normative influence), Asch had college students identify which of three lines on one card was the same length as a line on another card in the presence of others, who unbeknownst to the participant, were all in on the study. When other people gave the wrong answer before the participant replied, the participant was more likely to agree to give the incorrect answer.

B. Muzafer Sherif (1936) tested conformity to *social norms,* rules about what behaviors are proper or not proper. He was able to demonstrate that individuals conform to social norms in a study in which individuals announced the distance of perceived motion of a point of light in a darkened room (this perceived motion is called the autokinetic effect). While individual judgments varied widely when a person stated them alone, judgments of perceived movement converged when groups of two or three were presenting them. This demonstrated that group norms affect individual judgments.

C. Reasons for conformity

1. *Normative social influence* is a person's desire to gain group approval and avoid group disapproval (e.g., going along in order to be "liked") (see Asch, 1956). Asch tested willingness to comply with other subjects' clearly wrong answers in his classic line study.

   Example—If all your friends are wearing their hair a certain way or wearing a certain type of clothing, you may start to do the same just to fit in, even if they do not say anything to you. Or, if someone tells a joke and everyone starts to laugh, you may notice that the others are laughing and then start to laugh yourself.

2. *Informational social influence* is a person's willingness to accept others' opinions regarding reality (e.g., going along in order to be "right").

   Example—On certain political issues, an individual may side with someone who is well informed on politics of these issues (e.g., a political commentator) rather than with someone who is less informed about these issues.

3. Cultural effects—Some cultures value conformity; others value individualism.

   (a) Collectivist cultures are societies that value putting a group's needs above an individual's needs.

For example, when Asians are asked to describe themselves, they often say that they are members of a village or a family, or participants in certain clubs.

(b) Individualistic cultures are societies that value putting an individual's needs and wants over those of the group's. Capitalistic societies often fit this model.

The United States is an individualistic culture. Even U.S. television shows often model these values; on the television show *Survivor*, for example, people frequently put their own needs above those of the group's despite the fact that they are supposed to be working as part of a team.

(c) Individuals living in collectivist cultures tend to conform more than individuals living in individualistic cultures because they more often look out for the good of the group and allow individual ideas to be stifled if stifling them benefits the group. Individualistic cultures like the United States generate individuals who are more concerned with personal opinion and personal gain.

4. Ambiguity of the situation—people rely more on the opinions and behaviors of others in uncertain situations.

Example—When people are in a room and they see smoke, if other people are around, they will probably check to see if others are alarmed. If the others do not seem to be alarmed, the people are unsure if they are really in an emergency situation (Darley & Latané, 1968).

5. Individual differences exist with conformity. Individuals who are highly motivated to achieve have high self-esteem, are less concerned with the approval of others, and are less likely to conform.

D. Conformity includes both compliance and obedience. Conformity refers to any behavior that occurs as a result of outside influence.

VI. Compliance

Compliance is obeying a direct request or giving in to overt social pressure.

A. The *foot-in-the-door effect* is the concept that if people first agree to a small request, they are more likely to comply with a larger request later (Freedman & Fraser, 1966). Those who agreed to make a small contribution to a political campaign or sign a petition showing support at one point in time were more likely than others to donate greater sums of money in the future. Because actions can fuel attitudes, acts following initial behavior can be easier to agree to.

1. *Example*—If a young woman's curfew is midnight and she asks her mother if she can stay out until 12:30 a.m., her mother may say yes. If her mother does say yes, the next week the young woman may ask if she can stay out until 1:00 a.m., and her mother may say yes again.

2. This also can be explained by self-perception process (people infer their beliefs from their actions) and by the desire for consistency (to both be consistent and to appear consistent).

B. The *door-in-the-face effect* is if people are asked for a large favor first (which they deny), they are more likely to comply with a subsequent smaller request. This can happen if a person first makes a request that most people say no to. If a person has already said no, but wants to be perceived positively, the person is more likely to say yes to a more reasonable request.

1. *Example*—If a young man asks his parents for $100 to go see a movie, they will probably say, "no." If the young man then asks them for $20 after they have said no to the $100, they are more likely to give it to him.

2. The results of this effect can be explained by the *norm of reciprocity* (we should return favors done to us): If the requestor has conceded his or her request, we can concede our initial denial.

C. Other forms of compliance (Breckler, Olson, & Wiggins, 2006) include the *free gift technique* (giving someone a small free gift increases the possibility of agreement with a later request), the *low-ball technique* (offering something at one price and increasing the price after an agreement is made), the *scarcity technique* (increasing the attractiveness of a product by making the product appear limited or rare), or the *liking technique* (the likeability of a requestor can increase compliance).

See Activity 4.1
Design Your Own Persuasion Campaign

VII. Obedience

Obedience is a form of compliance that occurs when people follow direct commands, usually from someone in a position of authority.

See Activity 4.2
Primetime *Broadcast DVD*

A. In a classic study by Milgram (1963), participants were instructed to administer shocks of increasing voltages to another participant every time the second participant made an error on a learning task. The second participant was collaborating in the study and did not actually receive any shocks. The actual participant could only hear the collaborating participant's voice. The shock machine had 30 switches, with shocks increasing from a slight shock to an extremely dangerous 450 volts (marked "XXX"). After a certain number of errors, the fake participant would start screaming and yelling that he wanted to be let out of the room. Participants would be told to continue with the shocks. Sixty-three percent of the male participants obeyed instructions all the way to administering the highest voltage. Participants were more likely to administer shocks to the fake participant ("learner") when an authority figure was nearby.

Milgram's study was criticized for being unethical. Regulations are in place today to govern the treatment of human participants in research.

B. Other examples of obedience are found in cults and propaganda.

1. A *cult* is a rigid group with a charismatic leader. Jonestown is an example of a cult. In the late 1970s, Jim Jones, a dynamic leader of the People's Temple cult, ordered his followers to commit mass suicide by drinking cyanide-laced Kool-Aid. A small minority refused to cooperate, but most went along with his orders and took their own lives. In another mass suicide, members of the Heaven's Gate Cult took their lives after their leader gave a directive at a mansion in Rancho Santa Fe, CA, in 1997.

2. *Propaganda* is a persuasive attempt that is purposefully biased, motivated by a specific idea or ideology. Propaganda can range from the persuasive attempts used by Hitler in Nazi Germany to the messages we see every day in television commercials.

C. Influences on obedience include:

1. The prestige of the authority

2. The presence of others who obey/disobey

3. Personality characteristics

   (a) High authoritarianism

   (b) *External locus of control* is the phenomenon that results when people believe that they cannot control their own environment, rather it controls them. For example, regardless of how hard a person studies for a test, he/she is unable to get a good grade. This might eventually lead to learned helplessness.

VIII. Social Impact Theory

Social impact theory is one model used to describe what we observe in social influence.

Social impact theory identifies social forces acting on individuals that lead to social influence, similar to the effect physical objects have on other objects. The strength, immediacy (or closeness), and number of forces determine the overall influence of a set of social forces. The theory, which provides mathematical models of conformity, is well supported but is more descriptive than explanatory.

IX. Prosocial Behavior

See Activity 4.3
Friends *Episode on Altruism*

A. *Helping behaviors* are any act intended to benefit another person. McGuire (1994) suggested four categories for helping behaviors: casual helping (e.g., lending a classmate a pencil), emergency helping (e.g., calling 911 after seeing a car accident), substantial personal helping (e.g., picking a friend up from an airport), and emotional helping (e.g., listening to a friend who just broke up from a long-term relationship). Helping behaviors can vary among three dimensions (Pearce and Amato, 1980): Helping can either be planned or unplanned, the seriousness of the situation in which helping occurs can vary, and there is a difference in helping behaviors between giving and doing.

There are two types of motivation behind helping behaviors: *egoistic motivation* (helping to gain benefit for the self) or *altruistic motivation* (helping to benefit another person).

B. *Altruism* is the unselfish regard for others' welfare. For example, helping an elderly person cross the street when it is cold outside just to be nice without expecting anything in return is altruistic.

Models of altruism:

1. Negative–state relief model—Helping others aids in eliminating negative moods and unpleasant feelings.

2. Empathy–altruism model—Unselfish behavior can occur as a result of empathy with or understanding of another person.

3. Cost–reward model—When we make a decision whether or not to help others we first assess how much there is to gain or to lose from the particular situation.

C. Factors that influence helping and altruistic behavior

See Activity 4.4
Good Samaritan Laws

1. Perception of a need to help—Is there a situation in which a person or cause will benefit from your help? The norm of social responsibility indicates that we should help people who need help, and personal norms reflect personal values and personal expectations related to helping.

2. A decision to take responsibility

   (a) The *bystander effect* is a social phenomenon in which people are less likely to provide needed help when there are others present than when they are alone. The effect is influenced by the number of people available to intervene. If you are the only bystander present, you are more likely to help a person in need than if there are others present, since in the latter situation, these other bystanders could also help. (See Lesson 2 for details on Kitty Genovese murder.)

   (b) *Diffusion of responsibility*—When people are in a group, they think someone else will intervene and give needed help. However, when people are alone, they feel solely responsible for the fate of an individual who may need help. (Latané & Nida in 1981 estimated that subjects who were alone provided help 75% of the time, while subjects in the presence of others provided help only 53% of the time.)

3. The relative cost of acting or not acting (See cost-reward model above)—What will helping cost you physically, financially, and/or emotionally? What will not acting cost you? People consider these factors when deciding whether or not to help or volunteer.

4. The presence of an ally—Individuals are more likely to act prosocially if there are others doing the same.

5. A sense of competence—This can encourage individuals to help others because helping is self-gratifying, for example, as in tutoring those in need of academic help.

6. A sense of empathy toward the person in need—Compassion can motivate individuals to act in ways to benefit the person in need. Because people feel compassionate toward people or causes they feel strongly about, they are more likely to help those people or causes. An example is volunteering at a soup kitchen or a homeless shelter.

The Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) measures individual differences in empathy (see Davis, 1983, 1996). People who score high on the IRI tend to be more empathetic.

7. Modeling—Observing helpful behavior can increase a person's helpfulness.

8. Several studies have demonstrated that being in a good mood can increase a person's helpfulness (e.g., Isen & Levin, 1972).

9. Guilt can increase helping behaviors, for example if we feel responsible for causing another's trouble (e.g., Konečni, 1972).

10. Altruistic personality—Some people are simply more willing to help than others.

D. Emergency helping

Latané and Darley (1970) proposed a decision tree, which outlined five steps one must go through to intervene in an emergency. In order to intervene, a person must notice the event; interpret the event as an emergency; accept responsibility for helping; choose an appropriate helping behavior; and, finally, implement the behavior. All steps must occur before a bystander takes action.

X. Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is the tendency to communicate our thoughts and feelings through nonverbal behaviors.

In humans, our nonverbal channels of communication include everything except the content of our words: our facial expressions, bodily posture and gestures, clothing, odors, paralinguistic tone of words (as opposed to content). An example is flirtation.

Lesson 5. Intergroup Relations and Prejudice

I. Prejudice

Prejudice is a positive or negative (generally negative) attitude formed about others because of their membership in a group.

An example is being suspicious of someone because he/she is of a middle-eastern background.

See Activity 5.1
You Have to Be Taught to Hate

A. *Aversive racism* is prejudice held by individuals who do not consider themselves to be prejudiced, but who harbor some negative attitudes toward members of minority groups.

B. Prejudice can also reflect a positive attitude toward individuals or groups.

Example—Harvard University graduates may be held in higher esteem compared to other college graduates.

II. Discrimination

Discrimination is the behavior that affects members of a targeted group.

Discrimination can be explained by prejudice. A company's paying female employees less than male employees is an example of discrimination.

III. Stereotypes

A *stereotype* is the cognitive component of prejudices and discrimination.

In stereotyping, beliefs about a group are applied to all members of that group (e.g., females are gentle, kind, and nurturing).

See Activity 5.3
Stereotyping and Diversity

A. Stereotypes can cause oversimplication (assuming much similarity within groups of people (e.g., all Canadians are alike)) and negativity (stereotypes often contain negative traits (e.g., some stereotypes of car salesmen)).

B. Stereotypes can bias attention because people often look for information that will confirm a stereotype. Stereotypes also affect how behavior is interpreted. Correll, Park, Judd, and Wittenbrink (2002) found that White participants involved in a videogame simulation were faster to judge if a Black target was armed with a weapon than to judge if a White target was armed. Results also showed that more errors in judgment were made with Black targets. These results demonstrate the effects of race on weapon misperception.

IV. Sexism

A. *Sexism* is prejudice directed at women because of their gender. *Benevolent sexism* reflects a positive but paternalistic attitude toward women, while *hostile sexism* reflects negative attitudes toward women who do not exhibit the traditional female stereotype.

B. Gender stereotypes (e.g., men are strong and independent, and women are warm and emotional) tend to overstate or exaggerate gender differences.

See Activity 5.2
Music Videos and the Portrayal of Men and Women

V. Sources of Prejudice

A. We learn to be prejudiced in the following ways:

1. Classical conditioning is when a neutral stimulus is paired with a stimulus that elicits a response so that after time the neutral stimulus alone elicits a similar response.

Example—When African Americans are paired with violence on television news broadcasts, individuals may begin to view African Americans as violent.

2. Instrumental conditioning is a process in which responses that produce rewards are strengthened.

   Example—If a peer group rewards a person who is acting prejudiced toward a member of a group, the person may strengthen the prejudiced behavior.

3. Modeling is the process of observing and imitating a specific behavior.

   Example—A child learning prejudices from parents or sharing a parent's political affiliation not because he/she necessarily agrees with a given candidate, but because of the parental influence.

B. Cognitive processes—We also show prejudice by the way we tend to think about ourselves, others, and the world.

1. Ingroup favoritism and outgroup bias

   (a) *Ingroup* is "us," people with whom a person shares an identity.

   (b) *Outgroup* is "them," those believed to be different or separate from a person's ingroup.

2. *Examples*—Students often believe their school is superior to other schools, or members of one political party might feel superior to members of the other political party (members of one party may believe they are wiser than the other party).

3. The *outgroup homogeneity effect* is when a person who is looking at an outgroup does not perceive individual differences among members of the group.

   Example—If you are an English major, you might think all accounting majors are alike (detail-oriented, quiet, logical, etc).

4. *Stereotyping*—These are schemas about an entire group of people; they include perceptions, beliefs, and expectations.

   Examples include believing that all women are bad at math, or that all freshmen are immature.

5. *Scapegoating* is blaming an entire outgroup for social or economic frustrations.

   Example—Hitler blamed Jews for the economic problems in Germany.

6. *Ethnocentrism* is judging a person's own ethnic, racial, or national group as "correct" or "best" and judging outgroups by that standard.

   Examples—U.S. students might believe their educational system to be "right" and "good," while other models are "wrong" or "bad," or American citizens may believe that developing and unstable nations should adopt the U.S. system of government.

7. *Authoritarianism* is a personality type exceptionally prone to scapegoating, labeling, having prejudice against outgroups, and being in favor of its ingroup. Adorno (1950) first identified high authoritarianism by using a Fascism, or F-scale, which identified high authoritarians as highly conformist, obedient, rigid, judgmental, and prejudiced.

VI. Stereotype Threat

A. *Stereotype threat* is the apprehension arising in a person from the person's awareness of a negative stereotype involving his/her own group, which can undermine motivation and impair performance. Stereotype threat occurs when an individual is in a situation in which the stereotype is relevant.

B. Steele and Aronson (1995) found that African American students at Stanford University performed worse than White students when tested under conditions that elicited stereotype threat by reminding students of their race, but Black and White students performed equally well in nonthreatening test conditions. The measure was GRE test performance.

C. More recent research has examined ways of reducing stereotype threat, such as encouraging students to view intelligence as something that can be increased as opposed to something that is fixed (Aronson, Fried, & Good, 2002).

VII. Reducing Prejudice

A. *Contact hypothesis* is the hypothesis that bringing members of different groups together and letting them get acquainted to discover commonalities will decrease stereotypes.

An example of this is a school commission made up of representatives from the faculty, administration, and student body brought together to update the student handbook.

B. Conditions necessary for contact to work:

1. Groups are of roughly equal social and economic status.
2. Cooperation and interdependence exist.
3. The contract occurs on a one-to-one basis and there is opportunity for the groups to work and socialize together.

C. *Example*—Teachers can create jigsaw classrooms (composed of students from different ethnic groups) that foster cooperation by having students take ownership of the learning process. The jigsaw classroom promotes cooperation by creating student interdependence. This methodology was proposed by Aronson (1990) as an alternative to the traditional classroom. Research demonstrates that this methodology produces more positive intergroup attitudes.

D. According to Breckler, Olson, and Wiggins (2006), we can reduce prejudice by judging people as individuals rather than as members of groups. We should use the colorblind approach to reduce racial prejudice. For example, we should use the person's name rather than their group identity when describing the person. We should also embrace the concept of multiculturalism as way to reduce prejudice among different ethnic groups.

E. Antidiscrimination policies and legislation make it illegal for employers or other authorities to make decisions based on an individual's race, sex, age, and so on.

Lesson 6. Aggression

I. Hostile Versus Instrumental Aggression

A. *Aggression* is any behavior, whether physical or verbal, intended to hurt another.

Example—Using sarcasm to put another person down is aggresive behavior.

See Activity 6.1
Defining Aggression

B. *Hostility* (or *hostile aggression*) results from frustration and is not necessarily intended to produce benefits.

Example—Being mean to a person you do not know just for the sake of being mean is hostile behavior.

C. *Instrumental aggression* is aggression used to gain some personal benefit.

Example—Putting someone down to make you feel better is instrumental aggression.

II. Explanations of Aggression and Antisocial Behavior

A. The *general aggression model* (GAM) suggests that aggression is the result of multiple psychological processes. The GAM takes into account situational variables, aggressive thoughts and feelings, arousal, appraisal or interpretation, and behavior choice.

B. Biomedical explanations

1. Genetic influences—One study done by Raine, et al. (1994) found that the prefrontal area of the cortex metabolized glucose at a significantly slower rate in murderers than those who do not kill. This may result in a decreased ability to control aggressive impulses, as well as a lack of judgment.

2. Brain damage influences on the limbic system (hypothalamus and amygdala)—Coccaro (1989) found that damage to these structures may produce defensive aggression, which includes heightened aggressiveness to stimuli that are not usually threatening or decreases in the responses that normally inhibit aggression.

3. Hormonal influences (Reinisch et al., 1991)—Children of women who had taken testosterone during pregnancy to prevent miscarriage became more aggressive than children of the same sex who had not been exposed to testosterone during prenatal development. (This held true for both males and females.)

4. Drugs—Alcohol can increase antisocial and aggressive behavior. For example, alcohol myopia (alcohol "nearsightedness") can impair a person's perception and thoughts and make social responses more extreme (Steele & Josephs, 1990).

C. Learning explanations

1. *Social learning theory* suggests that people learn responses, including aggressive responses, by observing other people.

   (a) Modeling—When violent behavior is displayed in the home or by authority figures, children learn to imitate the negative behavior. Bandura, et al. (1961) found that children who watched an authority figure pummel a BoBo doll were more likely to be aggressive toward the BoBo doll than were children who did not see an authority figure act aggressively toward a BoBo doll.

   The movie *Burning Bed* supposedly influenced a man's decision to set his wife on fire.

   (b) *Example*—Children who watch all-star wrestling and then mimic the wrestling moves with their siblings demonstrate modeling behavior.

   (c.) Both social and cultural environments can shape aggressive behavior.

2. Reinforcement for aggressive behavior—Geen (1998) found that people become more aggressive when rewarded for aggressiveness and less aggressive when punished for aggression.

   Example—Being punished for fighting with your younger brother will lessen the chance you will fight with him again.

D. Environmental conditions

1. Frustration—aggression hypothesis

   Frustration produces readiness to respond aggressively; environmental cues that are associated with aggression can lead to aggressive behavior. Neither frustration nor the cues (e.g., guns) alone can explain aggressive behavior (e.g., race riots).

2. Environmental stress (air pollution, noise, crowding, etc.) can influence aggressive behavior. Heat, for example, increases aggression.

   Example—Hurricane Katrina survivors who waited at the crowded Superdome in New Orleans for evacuation became aggressive.

3. Cultural influences—The acceptability of violence and antisocial behavior varies greatly between cultures.

   (a) Culture may influence the use of firearms or whether disputes are solved through adjudication versus confrontation.

E. Media influences

1. This is the idea that those who are exposed to numerous violent influences through film, television, and video games will be more likely to engage in violent behavior. Huesmann and Eron (1986) found that children who watched more violent television and who identified with aggressive characters were more aggressive compared to other children. Huesmann, Moise-Titus, Podolski,

& Eron (2003) later found that these same aggressive children became more aggressive adults in their early 20s and were more likely to demonstrate verbal, physical, and criminal aggression compared to others from the earlier study.

See Activity 6.2
Violence and the Media

2. Studies have also examined the correlation between interactive violent video games and aggressive behavior. While research conclusions vary, studies of young children have revealed that children are more aggressive after they play an aggressive video game than they are when they play a nonaggressive video game (Irwin & Gross, 1995).

F. Generalized arousal

1. Transferred excitation can make aggressive behavior more likely when there is a reason, opportunity, or target for aggressive behavior. Because of this phenomenon, police often increase their presence at certain sporting games (e.g., games for a coveted title or games between teams with a history of rivalry).

2. *Excitation transfer*—Arousal can lead to aggression. Zillmann, Katcher, and Milavsky (1972) found that when participants engaged in a procedure that elicited anger and then were physiologically aroused, they behaved more aggressively than other participants who were not exposed to both arousing conditions.

G. The *cognitive neoassociation model of aggression* predicts that negative or unpleasant events activate anger and fear (fight or flight) and that our decision to act aggressively or not depends on situational cues.

H. Aggression in children, close relationships, and groups

1. Some children use aggression (physical or verbal) to control peers. School bullies tend to use physical or verbal aggression on certain peers.

2. Violence can occur in close relationships, whether between partners or between parents and children. Straus and Gelles (1990) estimate that more than 25% of intimate couples have at least one physically aggressive episode in the relationship.

3. Mob violence occurs when people in a group act aggressively. This violence is often unplanned and is typically triggered by events that make people angry.

III. Controlling Aggression

Ways to control aggression include:

A. Controlling anger

B. Learning alternatives to aggression (such as communication)

C. Reducing aversive environments (e.g., through social policies that aim to reduce poverty)

Lesson 7. Interpersonal Attraction

I. Dyadic Relationships

Dyadic relationships are relationships that form between two individuals.

Dyadic relationships start at birth (between child and caregiver) and continue through adulthood, as people become involved in intimate relationships. *Interpersonal attraction* is the study of attraction between people.

II. Factors Influencing Attraction

A. Proximity—Individuals who live close to one another and have frequent interactions are more likely to begin and sustain relationships with one another. Proximity allows us to get to know each other better because we have more frequent contact with one another.

B. Similarity—People are more likely to be attracted to those who are similar in age, race, religion, social class, personality, education, and physical attractiveness. Similarity often relates to the self-serving bias, as it helps us to reaffirm the positive characteristics in ourselves by finding them attractive in another individual.

The *attitude-similarity effect* suggests that the more similar people are in attitudes and beliefs, the more attractive they will be to each other. In contrast, the *repulsion hypothesis* suggests that the more people differ in attitudes and beliefs, the less attractive they will be to each other.

C. Physical attractiveness—Symmetrical faces and bodies are more sexually attractive than unsymmetrical ones; an average face is attractive. Both men and women (and even babies) tend to like good-looking people, and physical attractiveness has wide-ranging effects. For example, attractive people are typically perceived as healthy and more successful. Attractiveness varies over time and across cultures, although there are common views across cultures of what an attractive face is.

D. Familiarity (mere exposure effect)—Individuals are more likely to be drawn to individuals with whom they have frequent interactions. Familiarity is related to proximity because proximity allows for breeding of familiarity.

E. Reciprocity—Individuals tend to like people who like (or appear to like) them.

See Activity 7.1
The Lonely Hearts Club

III. Two Theories of Romantic Attraction

A. Robert J. Sternberg's triangular theory of love

1. Combinations of basic components lead to different types of love.

2. Components

(a) Passion is a complete absorption in another that includes tender sexual feelings and the agony and ecstasy of intense emotion.

(b) Commitment is an intent to maintain a relationship in spite of the difficulties and costs that may arise.

(c) Intimacy is warmth, closeness, and sharing in a relationship.

3. Types of love

(a) Romantic love is high passion and intimacy; lack of substantial commitment.

(b) Companionate love is high intimacy and commitment; low passion.

(c) Fatuous love is high passion and commitment.

(d) Consummate love is high in all three components.

B. Elaine Hatfield's two types of love

1. Passionate love is wildly emotional, intense, temporary, and likely to occur in the beginning of a relationship. Arousal is a key factor in passionate love.

2. Companionate love is deep affectionate attachment, develops as love matures, and is based on friendship and commitment.

See Activity 7.2
Romantic Relationships: Studying Theories of Personal Relationship Development

Social Psychology

A Unit Lesson Plan for High School Psychology Teachers

Activity 1.1

The Fundamental Attribution Error

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The fundamental attribution error (FAE) is the tendency to make dispositional attributions about others and to underestimate the influence of the situation in shaping people's behavior. In this activity, students have the opportunity to rate traits of both themselves and their teachers to demonstrate the FAE.

Materials

Instructors should prepare a two-sided handout with one of two attribution scales on each side. Attribution Scale—Side 1 instructs students to circle those traits that best describe themselves. Attribution Scale—Side 2 instructs students to circle those traits that best describe the psychology instructor. Each scale provides 14 pairs of traits (e.g., uninhibited vs. self-controlled) along with an option to select "depends on the situation."

Instructions

1. The day before students read about the fundamental attribution error, ask them to fill out the attribution scales in class. Assure them that their answers will be anonymous.

2. After they complete both sides, ask them to count the number of times they circled "depends on the situation" on each side of the sheet and to record that number at the bottom of the page.

3. Assign a student to compute the average number of times "depends on the situation" was circled on each side.

4. Begin class the next day by asking students to guess which side had a higher average and to theorize about why. Then, have the student who computed the averages report her/his findings and discuss them.

If all goes well, students will circle "depends . . ." more frequently in describing themselves, thus evidencing that they were more likely to attribute their teacher's behaviors to personality than they were their own. The most common explanation for this finding is that we see ourselves in many different situations but other people in relatively few. Therefore, we are more sensitive to the impact of the situation on our own behavior.

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Attribution Scale—Side 1

For each of the following pairs, circle the trait that best describes you. If neither of the traits is most characteristic of you, circle “depends on the situation.”

Uninhibited	Self-Controlled	Depends on the Situation
Cautious	Bold	Depends on the Situation
Dominant	Deferential	Depends on the Situation
Quiet	Talkative	Depends on the Situation
Skeptical	Trusting	Depends on the Situation
Intense	Calm	Depends on the Situation
Realistic	Idealistic	Depends on the Situation
Dignified	Casual	Depends on the Situation
Reserved	Emotional	Depends on the Situation
Lenient	Firm	Depends on the Situation
Unassuming	Self-Asserting	Depends on the Situation
Energetic	Relaxed	Depends on the Situation
Subjective	Analytic	Depends on the Situation
Serious	Lighthearted	Depends on the Situation

Attribution Scale—Side 2

For each of the following pairs, circle the trait that best describes your psychology instructor. If neither of the traits is most characteristic of him/her, circle "depends on the situation."

Uninhibited	Self-Controlled	Depends on the Situation
Cautious	Bold	Depends on the Situation
Dominant	Deferential	Depends on the Situation
Quiet	Talkative	Depends on the Situation
Skeptical	Trusting	Depends on the Situation
Intense	Calm	Depends on the Situation
Realistic	Idealistic	Depends on the Situation
Dignified	Casual	Depends on the Situation
Reserved	Emotional	Depends on the Situation
Lenient	Firm	Depends on the Situation
Unassuming	Self-Asserting	Depends on the Situation
Energetic	Relaxed	Depends on the Situation
Subjective	Analytic	Depends on the Situation
Serious	Lighthearted	Depends on the Situation

Activity 1.2

Belief in a Just World and Blaming the Victim

Discussion

The "just-world phenomenon" provides background information about belief in the just-world phenomenon and how it can lead to blaming victims for their misfortune. This tendency is pervasive but may be reversible if students are alerted to this error. The following exercise provides a means for a classroom examination of the phenomenon of blaming the victim. Bloyd (1990) presented this exercise based on a story from Dolgoff and Feldstein (1984). Read the following story to your class.

> Once upon a time, a husband and a wife lived together in a part of the city separated by a river from the places of employment, shopping, and entertainment. The husband had to work nights. Each evening he left his wife and took the ferry to work, returning home in the morning.
>
> The wife soon tired of this arrangement. Restless and lonely, she would take the next ferry into town and develop relationships with a series of lovers. Anxious to preserve her marriage, she always returned home before her husband. In fact, her relationships were always limited. When they threatened to become too intense, she would precipitate a quarrel with her current lover and begin a new relationship.
>
> One night she caused such a quarrel with a man we will call Lover 1. He slammed the door in her face, and she started back to the ferry. Suddenly, she realized that she had forgotten to bring money for her return fare. She swallowed her pride and returned to Lover 1's apartment. But Lover 1 was vindictive and angry because of the quarrel. He slammed the door on his former lover, leaving her with no money. She remembered that a previous lover, whom we shall call Lover 2, lived just a few doors away. Surely he would give her the ferry fare. However, Lover 2 was still so hurt from their old quarrel that he, too, refused her the money.
>
> Now the hour was late, and the woman was getting desperate. She rushed down to the ferry and pleaded with the ferryboat captain. He knew her as a regular customer. She asked if he could let her ride free and if she could pay the next night. But the captain insisted that rules were rules and that he could not let her ride without paying the fare.
>
> Dawn would soon be breaking, and her husband would be returning from work. The woman remembered that there was a free bridge about a mile further on, but the road to the bridge was a dangerous one, known to be frequented by highwaymen. Nonetheless, she had to get home, so she

took the road. On the way a highwayman stepped out of the bushes and demanded her money. She told him she had none. He seized her. In the ensuing tussle, the highwayman stabbed the woman, and she died.

Thus ends our story. There have been six characters: Husband, Wife, Lover 1, Lover 2, Ferryboat Captain, and Highwayman. Please list all the characters in descending order of responsibility for this woman's death. In other words, the one most responsible is listed first; the next most responsible, second; and so forth.

After students have followed your instructions at the end of the story, create a list of the characters. Ask for a show of hands for each of the six positions, and record the results. Bloyd reported that about half will typically choose the wife first and half will list the highwayman first, which matches my classroom results. Those choosing the wife will often cite reasons as "she deserved it," "she was asking for trouble," or "she should have known better." Basically, they are holding the wife responsible for her plight; the victim is being blamed.

A simple change in the story can reverse these results in dramatic fashion. If the wife becomes a widow who works at night to make money to support her children and has "to get home before the babysitter leaves, the highwayman, and not the wife, is blamed more often (Hill, Smith, White, & Galliano, 1997). However, the highwayman's behavior has not changed. This result makes it clear that the wife is being blamed for her own murder because of her morals. An interesting and animated discussion can be generated between those who hold opposing viewpoints.

Another interesting story change would be to reverse the genders so that the husband is the cheater. See if there is a difference in how female versus male behavior is perceived.

This exercise helps sensitize students to the tendency to blame the victim. You can relate this finding to victims of crime, poverty, and so forth. Blaming the victim is also often related to the fundamental attribution error.

References

Bloyd, J. R. (1990, October). *Blaming the victim.* Presented at the MidAmerica Conference for Teachers of Psychology, Evansville, IN.

Dolgoff, R., & Feldstein, D. (1984). *Understanding social welfare* (2nd ed.). New York: Longman.

Hill, G. W., IV, Smith, R. A., White, M., & Galliano, G. (1997). *Classroom demonstration of variability in the blaming the victim phenomenon.* Presented at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Rubin, Z., & Peplau, L. A. (1975). Who believes in a just world? *Journal of Social Issues, 31,* 65-89.

Adapted From

Weiten, W. (1998). *Psychology: Themes and variations, instructor's resource book* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth Publishers.

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Social Psychology

A Unit Lesson Plan for High School Psychology Teachers

Activity 2

Deindividuated: What Would You Do?

David K. Dodd
Washington University in St. Louis

Although posing "what if you were invisible" situations and the like to elicit predictions of antisocial behavior are common, this exercise is exceptional for providing normative data for comparison and provocative questions for discussion. This exercise can be used to tie in a discussion of learning and the role of reward, punishment, and negative reinforcement in controlling human behavior. The in-class activity requires neither advance preparation, nor prior knowledge of psychology. This activity is appropriate for virtually any size class.

Concept

Zimbardo (1979a) defined deindividuation as "a complex process in which a series of social conditions lead to changes in perception of self and of other people," so that "behavior that is normally restrained and inhibited is 'released' in violation of established norms of appropriateness" (p. 702). A major contributing factor to deindividuation is perceived anonymity, which psychologically protects individuals from being held responsible for their actions.

This activity is designed to illustrate the concept of deindividuation and to show that even "normal, well-adjusted" students are capable of highly inappropriate, antisocial behavior, given certain social and situational conditions. The exercise is most effective prior to a discussion of situational influences on antisocial behavior.

Instructions

Distribute a blank half-sheet of paper to each student, while emphasizing that students are not to place their names or other identifying information on it. Announce that you may read their responses to the forthcoming question aloud to the class, but that you will not identify the respondent by name. (Requiring all students to use pencils and to print their responses will provide additional safeguards of confidentiality.) Stress that students should not discuss their own answers or question others about their answers, either during or after the exercise. Read the following stimulus instruction out loud: "If you could do anything humanly possible with complete assurance that you would not be detected or held responsible, what would you do?" As students begin to think about their responses, there will probably be general laughter, and you may have to repeat the instruction. Ask students to fold their papers once, and then collect them.

Explain the concept of deindividuation and point out that a wide variety of responses can occur, including prosocial behavior (intended to benefit others), antisocial behavior

(intended to injure others or deprive them of rights), and non-normative behavior (clearly violates social norms but does not directly help or harm others). Examples of each kind of behavior can be given or elicited from the class.

If the class is small and time permits, each response from the class can be read aloud and categorized as prosocial, antisocial, or non-normative. (A catch-all "neutral" category will be necessary for some responses.) Alternatively, you can read and categorize the responses outside of class and then present a data summary prior to discussion during the next class session.

Discussion

I formally evaluated data from 10 college psychology classes (introductory and social) and three classes of students incarcerated in maximum security prisons. The sample of prisoner students made it possible to compare the responses of prisoners with nonprisoners in terms of the proportions and kinds of antisocial responses given. Analysis of the data revealed that 36% of the responses from both groups were antisocial, 19% non-normative, 36% neutral, and only 9% pro social. Regarding content, the most frequent responses involved criminal acts (26%), sexual acts (11%), and spying behaviors (11%). The most popular response was "rob a bank" (15%), and among the most antisocial responses (all collected from traditional college students) were murder, rape, and political assassination.

Students are very impressed by the fact that the responses of prisoners and traditional college students did not differ significantly with regard to either content or social desirability. Presenting this finding to the class can lead to an interesting discussion of the importance of situational conditions, such as perceived anonymity, rather than personal traits or characteristics, as determinants of antisocial behavior. Although prosocial responses (such as helping the poor or being kind to a personal enemy) are unusual, they also promote discussion: Why might it be easier for some people to behave prosocially when they are deindividuated?

Once you are comfortable with this exercise and have a feel for the kinds of student responses that will occur, you can also use it to demonstrate the concept of statistical prediction. Before you examine a collection of responses, try to predict the kinds of responses that have just been turned in, based on data from previous classes. For example, you may predict that bank robbery, spying, and sexual behavior will occur frequently, and vandalism and academic cheating occasionally. Use your predictions to begin a class discussion that focuses on the issue of generalizing from one sample (one class) to another and on the inability to predict accurately the responses of individuals, as opposed to the class as a whole.

References

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Adapted From

Dodd, D. K. (1985). Robbers in the classroom: A deindividuation exercise. *Teaching of Psychology, 12,* 89-91. [Used by permission of Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.] The original idea for this activity came from Zimbardo (1979b).

From

Dodd , D. K. (1987). Deindividuated: What would you do? In V. P. Makosky, L. G. Whittemore, & A. M. Rogers (Eds.), *Activities handbook for the teaching of psychology* (Vol. 2). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Social Psychology

A Unit Lesson Plan for High School Psychology Teachers

Activity 3.1

Cooperation and Competition

Louis Shellgrove

Concept

Are we aware of the number of times each day that we depend on someone else's cooperation to carry on our daily activities? Are we aware of the number of times a day that we compete with other people? The answers might be surprising! This activity is designed to help students understand how often we depend on someone else cooperating with us and how often we are involved in competing with others.

Instructions

Students should be instructed as follows:

"In both of the following conditions, you should not depend upon your memory for a long period of time. As soon as it is practical, make appropriate notes. For example, if you are driving a car and observe an appropriate event, do not stop the car just to make notes. Wait until you must stop for some other good reason.

"Over a period of 5 days, make a note of each activity you engage in that involves the cooperation of someone else. Examples might include someone driving a car, stopping at a four-way stop sign, and permitting you to go first even though they arrived first; someone opening a door for you when your arms are full; a friend picking you up for school; and so on. Pay no attention to the amount of time involved in the situations. At the end of each day, count the number of times you were involved in a cooperating situation in which someone else cooperated with you in some way. Record this frequency in a table similar to the one below.

"During the same 5-day period, make a note of each activity in which you compete with others. Some examples are any type of sports event in which you are a participant; seeing who can be first to get to class or to obtain a date with someone; any type of game involving you and one or more other people, and so on. Again, pay no attention to the length of time involved in any of the activities. At the end of each day, count the number of times you were involved in a competing situation."

Frequency per day

Situation	1	2	3	4	5	Total Mean
Cooperation						
Competition						

Discussion

The discussion should center on questions like these: (1) Did you encounter more situations that involved cooperation or competition? (2) Was there some particular day on which you found a very high (or low) number of events in either situation? If so, can you account for it? (3) As you counted the situations each day, or while you were taking notes during this activity, did it influence the kind of situation you were in? (4) Did performing this activity make you more aware of how often you are involved in each type of situation? (5) Were you surprised at the number of times you were involved in either situation? (6) If you had this many situations in which you cooperated or competed over a 5-day period, how many would you have in a year? During your lifetime? (7) As you become older, would you expect to have more or fewer such situations? Why?

In addition to discussing the questions given above, the class may wish to compare results between students in terms of what they considered to be situations involving competition and cooperation (not in terms of how much competition and cooperation). The following discussion questions are useful: Did other students' situations remind you of some that you perhaps overlooked? For example, did you include verbal competition situations? Did you include as a cooperating activity a situation in which you felt forced to do something that you really did not wish to do but did anyway (such as running an errand)? Would this be a cooperating situation?

Students may wish to repeat this activity to obtain a more reliable measure of how many competition and cooperation activities they were involved in.

Suggested Background Readings

Cook, H., & Stingle, S. (1974). Cooperative behavior in children. *Psychological Bulletin, 81,* 918-933.

Deutsch, M. (1953). The effects of cooperation and competition upon group processes. In D. Cartwright & A. F. Zander (Eds.), *Group dynamics: Research and theory.* Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

From

Snellgrove, L. (1981). Cooperation and competition. In L. T. Benjamin, Jr., & K. D. Lowman (Eds.), *Activities handbook for the teaching of psychology* (Vol. 1). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Activity 3.2

Cooperation Versus Competition: Will You Choose to Compete?

The prisoner's dilemma game forces people to choose between selfishness and cooperation. Visit this Web site, http://serendip.brynmawr.edu/playground/pd.html, to play an interactive prisoner's dilemma game. Gold coins instead of years in prison are at stake when you choose whether to cooperate or compete with your partner, Serendip. If you both choose to cooperate, you'll each receive three gold coins; if you both choose to compete, you'll each receive one gold coin; and if one of you competes while the other cooperates, the competitor will receive five gold coins, but the cooperator none. Will you choose to cooperate in an effort to maximize the common good, or will you try to come out ahead by competing? Try different strategies and see how you fare.

Adapted From

Breckler, S., Olson, J., & Wiggins, E. (2006). *Social psychology alive: The workbook* (1st ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth Publishers.

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Activity 4.1

Design Your Own Persuasion Campaign

Imagine that you work for your school's administration and you have been asked to develop a campaign to meet one of the following goals or a goal of your own choosing:

- Encourage college students to exercise regularly
- Encourage people to donate blood
- Encourage people to attend women's sporting events at your school
- Encourage people to vote in campus elections

Using the conformity, compliance, and obedience principles, how would you go about structuring such a persuasion campaign?

1. What topic would you choose?

2. Whom would you choose to be the spokesperson(s) for your campaign, and why? For example, the liking principle suggests that college students might be more persuaded by people who are similar to them, such as other college students. On the other hand, authority figures, as illustrated so vividly by the Milgram experiments, are also likely to induce compliance.

3. What messages could you incorporate into your campaign to induce compliance, and what persuasive techniques might you use? For example, having the spokesperson say the desired behavior is socially validated is one way to induce compliance. Or perhaps you could plan a campaign of serial advertisements and use the foot-in-the-door or door-in-the-face technique.

Adapted From

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Activity 4.2

Primetime *Broadcast DVD*

On January 3, 2007, ABC's *Primetime* featured a program about the Milgram obedience studies, including a recent partial replication of Milgram's study. The broadcast also included footage from the Stanford Prison Experiment. The broadcast can stimulate class discussion on obedience, as well as on research ethics. Please note the following press release from APA's Office of Public Affairs:

> Regarding APA's involvement with ABC News production "The Science of Evil," APA's Executive Director for Science (Dr. Steve Breckler) consulted with the producers of the segment. He helped to identify appropriate scientific experts to serve as collaborators and advised the producers to follow accepted ethical guidelines for research. This included seeking the approval of an Institutional Review Board, which was done. APA did not engage in a detailed "vetting" of the experimental protocol, nor was APA involved in the conduct of the experiment itself. Furthermore, APA did not review the final production before it was broadcast. ABC has agreed to clarify APA's role in the statement posted on the ABC Web site (January 5, 2007).

To order, go to www.abcnews.com, click on the *Primetime* tab, and scroll to the bottom of the *Primetime* page.

Primetime: Basic Instincts part 5, Code P070103 01, is $29.95. It is about 60-minutes in length.

ABC Primetime. (Producer). (2007). [DVD]. *Basic instincts, part 5* (The Science of Evil). (Available from ABC News, P.O. Box 48, Howell, MI 48844, http://abcnews.go.com/Primetime.)

Activity 4.3

Friends *Episode on Altruism*

In *Friends* episode number 101 (the fourth episode in season five), *The One Where Phoebe Hates* PBS, Phoebe and Joey discuss the possibility of whether there can indeed be a truly unselfish act. The first minute of this episode can be played in class to jump start discussion of altruism.

Crane, D. (Executive Producer). (2003). [DVD]. Friends—The complete fifth season. Burbank, CA: Warner Brothers. (Produced by Warner Home Video. Available through www.amazon.com.)

Activity 4.4

Good Samaritan Laws

"A sees B, a blind man, about to step into the street in front of an approaching automobile. A could prevent B from doing so by a word or a touch without delaying his own progress. A does not do so, and B is run over and hurt."

—*Restatement of Torts,* Second, Sec. 314

The common law that developed through the courts would impose no duty for Person A to help Person B. A bystander is not obligated to assist a stranger even if the stranger is in grave danger and the bystander could easily help the person in trouble. For example, a bystander would not be legally culpable if he or she stood on a riverbank and watched a stranger being swept to certain death, even though the bystander could have easily avoided the disastrous result by throwing out a nearby lifeline.

Although the common law imposed no duty to come to the aid of a stranger, it held that a volunteer (i.e., the "Good Samaritan") who helps can be held legally liable if he or she does not use reasonable care in rendering aid. That is, the person who was helped may be able to successfully sue if the helper was negligent is some way. This created the anomalous, almost bizarre situation, in which people who witness an accident may ignore seriously injured persons without incurring the disfavor of the law. But if they attempt to assist the victims, they might be held liable if they make mistakes in doing so.

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have taken legislative action to remedy this situation by passing "Good Samaritan" statutes (Stewart, 1998; Sullivan, 1832). These laws, named after a *New Testament* parable, encourage people to help at the scene of accidents by removing the fear that they will be held legally liable for doing so. The laws were initially aimed at medical providers, but have been extended to other would-be rescuers. Laws have also been enacted to impose a legal duty to help in the case of special relationships (e.g., an employer may be obligated to help an employee under certain situations).

The development of the law in the Canadian common law jurisdictions is similar to that in the United States (see Schwartz, 1995, 2004). However, in Quebec, a civil rather than a common law jurisdiction, the law imposes a duty on everyone to help a person in peril. Despite this difference, there have been few lawsuits against people who have played the Good Samaritan.

Questions

1. By not requiring people to help strangers in emergencies, the common law seems to recognize that human nature sometimes makes it difficult for them to do so. How does social psychology help explain why people are not as helpful in emergency situations as we would hope?

2. By imposing potential liability on those who actually do render aid, the common law actually discourages helping. What does social psychology say about people's reluctance to take responsibility in an ambiguous situation? How does the common law exacerbate their unwillingness? Under what situations might a person ignore the threat of potential liability and help a stranger?

3. How much do you think the "Good Samaritan" statutes actually encourage helping? What other obstacles may stand in the way of people rendering aid? Could other laws help eliminate these obstacles? Would such laws be fair, human nature being what it is?

Adapted From

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Social Psychology

A Unit Lesson Plan for High School Psychology Teachers

Activity 5.1

You Have to Be Taught to Hate

Debra Park
West Deptford High School, Westville NJ

Concept

This exercise is designed to help students understand the influences of an individual, peers, family, and community on children in the development of attitudes and behaviors, specifically relating to prejudice and discrimination. These activities address the following standards in the Variations in Individual and Group Behavior Domain of the *National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula*:
VC-1. Social judgment and attitudes
VC-2. Social and cultural categories
VC-3. Social influence and relationships
This activity can be used as a multiple-day activity or in abbreviated form for one day.

Materials

Book: Peters, W. (1987). *A class divided: Then and now.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Video: *A Class Divided—A Frontline Documentary* available from PBS Video.

Instructions

Note. These activities can be used at various times throughout the unit on social psychology. I use this as a culminating activity after discussing the text and after viewing "Discovering Psychology" segments on social psychology concepts. The questions developed for this activity can be used with the video alone if you cannot purchase the books for your class.

Activity One: Focus Activity

When studying the concepts of prejudice and discrimination, there is one famous study that has fascinated students for more than 30 years. You may want to write on the board the following quote: "You have to be taught to hate" (Peters, 1987). Ask students to react to this quote and prompt them to discuss examples of how they have seen individuals taught to dislike or hate other individuals and/or groups in our society. Ask for personal examples related to family, school, and our society.

Introduce the book *A Class Divided* to the students. Briefly explain what they are going to read about: an experiment done by a third-grade teacher following the death of Martin Luther King in 1968. Ask students if they are familiar with the "brown-eyed/blue-eyed" experiment. Have students read Chapter 1, pages 11-19, in class and provide them with the following questions to discuss following the reading:

1. Why did Jane Elliot decide to use this eye-color experiment with her class?
2. How did you feel about the students' answers to her questions about "why" Martin Luther King was assassinated? Why do you think they answered the way they did?
3. What did Elliot say about the "attitude of sympathetic indifference" people in her community had toward racial discrimination?

For homework, have students read Chapter 2.

Activity Two: Group Discussions

Divide students into small groups to discuss the following questions about Chapter 2:

1. How did Jane Elliot's words and actions frame the classroom discussion and affect the behavior of her students?
2. Identify examples of reinforcement used by Elliot toward the "brown-eyes" and the "blue-eyes"; discuss the results of that reinforcement.
3. Determine how she controlled the students' environment, developing discrimination in her classroom that mimicked real-world examples from the children's society.
4. Predict what the "blue-eyes" will do on Monday, when they become the students "on-top" and what the "brown-eyes" will do when they become the students "on the bottom."

Begin to read Chapter 3 in class. Ask students to finish it for homework and be prepared to discuss the following questions in a large group setting the next day:

1. How did the "brown-eyed" children and the "blue-eyed" children behave on Monday? Why did this surprise Elliot? Did it surprise you?
2. What, if any, differences did she see in the behavior of the children after switching their roles on Monday?
3. How do you feel about the teacher's treatment of her students in this experiment? What are your concerns? Do you feel it is ethical?
4. What problems do you think could have/did occur after this experiment was done?
5. Could this experiment take place today in our schools? Should it? (This is a great prompt for a writing assignment.)

Activity Three: Discuss the Questions

Discuss the questions stated above with the students. Explain to them that they will now be able to see the video of Jane Elliot's experiment, filmed the third time that she did it. View the documentary. Especially interesting to the students will be seeing the children's body language, the range of emotions displayed, and changes that they will observe of the class's personality both in the classroom and on the playground. Be sure to point out the date it was filmed-–language and comments made by the students should be addressed so that students are aware of the terms/comments used as appropriate to that time period. There will be a reaction to certain words used, and students should be given time to talk about this.

Activity Four: Continue to View the Video

Students will want to see the class reunion of these children that took place in 1984 and what they had to say about the experience. [How they felt at the time of the experiment and the lasting impact it has had on their attitudes and behaviors is riveting.] It is also important that you note your students' reactions to the way the young men and women speak at the reunion (accents, articulation, and poor grammar will be obvious); even the students' appearance. Some very interesting prejudices and stereotypes will be visible in your classroom during this presentation and should be addressed.

Extension Activities

1. Read the entire book. Chapters 6 through 8 are practically a script of the video they will view. Chapters 11 and 12 discuss in detail the reunion and Jane Elliot's perspective on the effects of doing this experiment over the years on her students, the community, and her own life.

2. View the segment of the video that shows Jane Elliot using this experiment with adults. The book also discusses this. Students will be shocked by how adults react to her.

3. The *TOPSS Cross-Cultural Unit Lesson Plan* has great information and activities that can be used in conjunction with this activity and your teaching of social psychology.

4. The *Psychology Teacher Network* late fall/early winter 2003 issue has an article by Steve Barney, PhD, "Confronting Prejudices and Stereotypes Through Service: A Service Learning Project in General Psychology" that I highly recommend.

5. I team up with a middle school teacher who uses this book and video with her students in an eighth-grade social studies class at the same time I use it with my classes. Together, we hold discussions using the Distance Learning Labs in our schools, bringing together my high school juniors and seniors and her eighth-graders for class discussions that follow the guidelines outlined in this activity.

Activity 5.2

Music Videos and the Portrayal of Men and Women

Michele A. Paludi, Union Graduate College, and
Bradley M Waite, Central Connecticut State University

For this activity the instructor will need the Bem Sex-Role Inventory and the Attitudes Toward Women Scale and have access to a VCR and monitor for showing videos to the class. Students rate four or five rock videos using the scales provided them and then compare their ratings. This activity is suitable for any size high school or undergraduate class. The recommended discussion and background reading make this activity most appropriate in conjunction with topics in social or developmental psychology.

This activity addresses the content standards in the *National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula:*
VC-1. Social judgment and attitudes
VC-2. Social and cultural categories

Concept

The purpose of this activity is to acquaint students with sexist portrayals of women in the media, particularly as expressed in music videos. Children today spend more time watching television than they do participating in any other activity, including sleeping. On a weekly basis, children spend four times as much time watching television as doing homework (Benton Foundation, 2004). A considerable amount of research has been devoted to the way in which children and adolescents are exposed to stereotyped representations of men and women on television. For example, males and females perform different activities on television: The men are more likely to be shown at work, while women are typically shown at home. In addition, male humans and animals are more than three times as common as females on children's television programs. Furthermore, men are typically described using terms that reflect rationality, assertiveness, and competence (or objectivity, self-confidence, and independence). Occupations stereotyped as male-appropriate include attorney, police officer, physician, and office manager. Women are shown to be emotional, submissive, and subjective. Traditional female-appropriate occupations include elementary school teacher, typist, librarian, and nurse. Both the masculine personality characteristics and the roles in which men appear are rated by both men and women as being more desirable, important, and prestigious. Thus, on television, women are relatively invisible, inaudible, and stereotyped in terms of their personality characteristics and occupations. Women of color are especially represented in a particularly biased manner. Research has indicated that this biased representation of men and women in the media influences reality. Children and adolescents who view stereotypic portrayals on TV become more stereotyped in their attitudes toward men's and women's roles and abilities.

Materials

You will need to find a TV channel that shows rock music videos. You may also want to videotape some videos to show in class as an in-class exercise. The short form of the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) is available from Mind Garden; 650-322-6300 or www.mindgarden.com. The short form of the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (AWS) can be found in the appendix.

Instructions

Describe the impact of gender-role stereotypes in the media and how they contribute to gender differences in real life. Information summerized in the concept section above may be helpful in this regard. Discuss advertisements that are demeaning to girls and women. It would be helpful to view the film *The Strength to Resist: Media's Impact on Women and Girls,* which describes the misogyny in the media. This film may be rented from Cambridge Documentary Films, PO Box 390385, Cambridge MA 02139 or 617-484-3993 or http://www.cambridgedocumentaryfilms.org/order.html.

Ask students to watch four or five rock music videos and complete the BSRI for the main male and female characters in each video. Students will rate the characters on a series of adjectives (10 each of masculine, feminine, and neutral). The scale can be completed in about 5 minutes per character.

Ask students to complete the AWS for each video according to how they believe the director of the video would answer the items. Students will answer 15 statements about the attitudes toward the rights and roles of women in contemporary society.

Areas assessed include vocation, behavior, sexual behavior, dating, and independence.

Discussion

Have students discuss whether the videos they watched were violent, sexist, or both. Ask them to consider how the videos perpetuate gender-role stereotypes. What kinds of activities are the women in the videos engaged in and how do they relate to what the men are doing? Some of the videos may seem to show women in a favorable light in portraying them as beautiful, desirable, talented, but have the students ask themselves if these women are being prized for anything more than their physical attributes or if there is any indication that the woman has an identity separate from the man she is associated with.

Ask students to compare their ratings on the BSRI and AWS with those of other classmates. Look for gender differences in responses to the items. You may also address ethnic and racial differences. Is there a difference between the way Black men (or men from other minorities) and White men are portrayed? What about the women? Discuss the reasons why these stereotypes continue to be presented in the videos and what could be done about it.

Reference

Benton Foundation Policy Brief. (2004, September). *How children can benefit from the transition to digital TV.* Washington, DC: Benton Foundation.

Suggested Reading

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Appendix

Attitudes Toward Women Scale

The statements listed below describe attitudes toward the roles of women in society that different people have. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. You are asked to express your feeling about each statement by indicating whether you (A) agree strongly, (B) agree mildly, (c) disagree mildly, or (D) disagree strongly.

1. Swearing and using obscenities are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than a man.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

2. Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

3. It is insulting to women to have the “obey” clause remain in the marriage service.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

4. A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

5. Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

6. Women should assume their rightful places in business and all the professions along with men.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

7. A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

8. It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

9. The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

10. Women should be given equal opportunity as men for apprenticeships in the various trades.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

11. Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

12. Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

13. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

14. Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set up by men.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

15. There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.

A	B	C	D
Agree Strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly

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From

Spence, J. T., & Helmreich, R. L. (1978). *Masculinity and femininity: Their psychological dimension, correlates and antecedents.* Austin: University of Texas Press.

Permission includes the right to make photocopies of the scale for classroom use only.

Social Psychology

A Unit Lesson Plan for High School Psychology Teachers

Activity 5.3

Stereotyping and Diversity

Meredith L. Sheriff
Lyons Township High School, LaGrange, IL

Objective

To demonstrate how perceptions are not always accurate and to teach the drawbacks of stereotyping others by race, job, gender, etc.

Materials

Pen, paper, or flip chart paper, Diversity Beans (See below; these are a special brand of flavorful jelly beans.)

Do not hand out the diversity beans at the beginning of the activity. Wait until indicated in the appropriate step.

1. Organize students into groups of six students each.

2. Begin by introducing the subject of stereotyping and asking students to define stereotyping. Write the group's definition on flip chart paper.

3. Have the group give examples of stereotyping and of the type of people who are stereotyped.

4. Expand on the group's definition and explain how everyone can be stereotyped in one way or another: by gender, race, religion, national origin, job, hobby, friends, etc. Discuss whether the group being stereotyped can accurately stereotype themselves. Point out that, typically, the people being stereotyped would not be able to stereotype themselves because they do not see the attributes that others see.

5. Give each group a piece of paper and assign each group a different class of people about whom to record stereotypes. Recommended classes are teachers, coaches, doctors, lawyers, professional sports players, movie stars, politicians, rock stars, teenagers, boys, girls, adults, Americans, Europeans, etc.

6. Have each group list all the stereotypical attributes of the class of people they are assigned.

7. Bring out the Diversity Beans but DO NOT pass them out and do not permit the students to eat them. State that we have six colors of beans, and the group must assign a jelly bean to the different classes stereotyped. Make sure each group knows the classes being stereotyped.

8. Have students pair the bean color with the expected flavor of the jelly bean (i.e., yellow to lemon). Explain that this is the basis for stereotyping, judging people not on what they may be, but on perceptions. Discuss where they think stereotypes are generally learned (home or school environment). Explain that everyone has stereotypes and that does not make us bad people.

9. Allow all groups share their stereotypes for their class of people. Does everyone think that they are valid stereotypes?

10. Now, have each student rank the six jelly bean colors in the order that they like them, from the bean they most want to eat to the bean they least want to eat. Have them share in their groups why they ranked their beans in the order they did.

11. Discuss if any students do not want to taste a specific color and discuss why.

12. Hand out the jelly beans and allow the students to choose which jelly bean they would like to eat. (You can give each student each jelly bean, but to save money, you can have them share the six). Have students taste their bean and record their perception before and the reality after tasting their bean.

13. Discuss the results thus far. What students got the flavor they did not expect? How did this make them feel? Ask if this changes anyone's expectations for the next beans they may eat and why.

14. Once the students have finished tasting the beans, ask them if they would rank the beans in the same order. Discuss why or why not.

15. Discuss with students why they put the beans in the order they did to start. Discuss if students were proved wrong. Indicate that they were relying on their expectations and the stereotype that each flavor only had one color match.

16. Relate this back to the class stereotypes and color designations earlier. Discuss with the group that you can't stereotype people into just one class; people have many attributes, and stereotyping based on just one of them is invalid. Stereotyping based on appearance is inaccurate as demonstrated in the activity the group just completed.

17. Discuss that we need to recognize and accept the fact that we all have differences due to race, gender, ethnic origin, socioeconomic status, etc. Diversity does not have to mean that we have to like everyone or that we need to accept everyone's behaviors. Diversity means that we are all different and we should be aware of the differences and not judge people based on appearances or perceived traits.

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2 oz bag of Diversity Beans™ (approx. 24 beans)	$1.50
Diversity Beans™ Candy Jar	$17.50
GIFT PACK: Diversity Beans™ Candy Jar and 1 pound bag of Diversity Beans™	$25.00
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Social Psychology

A Unit Lesson Plan for High School Psychology Teachers

Activity 6.1

Defining Aggression

Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr.
Texas A&M University

The major point of this activity is to illustrate psychological constructs, and as such, it would be appropriate for you to use it in conjunction with discussions of operational definitions or tests and measurements. The only advance preparation is the reproduction of the Aggression Questionnaire. The activity is appropriate for classes of any size, although the data-reporting sections would need to be modified for classes of more than 50. No prior knowledge of psychology is necessary.

This activity addresses the standard in the Variations in Individual and Group Behavior Domain of the *National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula:* VC-3. Social influence and relationships.

Concept

This activity is designed to generate class discussion on the definition of aggression and related issues of causation and control. It exposes students to a large number of issues involved in defining aggression and helps them to understand the complexity of such a construct and, thus, the reasons why their classmates and psychologists disagree about its meaning.

Aggression is a topic included in virtually every textbook on introductory psychology. Some books discuss aggression in the section on motivation and emotion, whereas others cover it as part of social psychology. Most include it in reference to research on humans, but discussion of some animal studies of aggression is also common. Treatment of related concepts such as violence, anger, frustration, and assertiveness are also common topics.

Although textbook coverage of aggression is almost guaranteed, a definition of the term is not. In a nonrandom sample of 10 introductory psychology books (selected from my bookcase), 5 provided an explicit definition of aggression, but the others left the meaning embedded in a series of paragraphs and so required the reader to serve as lexicographer. Considering the complexity of the term *aggression*, it is not surprising that these authors might choose to avoid espousing a particular definition.

In this activity, aggression is used as an example of a typical construct in psychology, permeated with a host of subtle meanings and not-so-subtle disagreements that make it difficult to reach a consensual definition. You could use other constructs such as intelligence or self-esteem, but I chose aggression because it generates considerable discussion among students. Anecdotal evidence for the fascination with this topic can be drawn from the prevalence of aggression as a theme in movies and television, the popularity of sports, and the interest many people show in reports of violent crime.

The exercise described here can be used in a number of classes, including introductory psychology or anywhere you treat the topic of aggression. It should be used prior to any lecture on aggression and before the students have read their textbook coverage of the subject. This activity works best in a class of 50 students or fewer, but by altering the data-reporting procedures, it can be used in much larger classes, although discussion obviously will suffer in large classes. The activity takes about 50 minutes but could be made shorter or longer. Your role in this exercise is to serve as a tabulator of the data and as a moderator of the discussion.

Materials

You will need to make enough copies of the Aggression Questionnaire shown at the end of this activity for each student in the class.

Instructions

At the beginning of the class, give each student a copy of the Aggression Questionnaire containing 25 numbered statements. Instruct the students as follows: "Read each statement and decide whether or not you believe the situation described is one of aggression." Wording of this instruction is critical so as not to bias the responses. Avoid using phrases like "aggressive act" or "aggressive behavior," because one of the issues to be discussed is whether some overt behavior needs to occur in aggression. Tell students to circle the number of each statement that describes aggression. They should respond according to their own beliefs and not how they think they should respond or how they think most people would respond. Compliance with this request can be enhanced by telling the students not to put their names on the questionnaires. Indeed, there is no reason in this exercise to know how a particular person responded. You may want to have the students indicate their gender on the questionnaire if you are interested in looking at potential gender differences in the definition of aggression. Such differences, if obtained, would undoubtedly add to the interest in the discussion.

Allow the students about 5 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Most, if not all, of the students will finish before that time, so you should be ready to proceed when the last person has finished. Collect the questionnaires, shuffle, and redistribute them to the class so that each student gets a copy. Most students will be given a questionnaire other than their own, but it is unimportant if they get their own copy back. This procedure allows students to report on the responses that may or may not be their own, thus eliminating a potential source of embarrassment.

Record the data on the board by reading each statement aloud and ask the students to raise their hands if the item is circled on the questionnaire they are holding. It is important to know the exact size of the class in this exercise to know the unanimity. For example, with a class size of 34, total agreement would get a score of 34, in which case every student agreed that the item described aggression; a score of zero would mean that no one thought the item described aggression. A unanimous score of zero is rare and typically occurs only on those items in which there seems to be no intent to harm. Tabulating the data on the chalkboard can be accomplished quickly, usually in less than 5 minutes, so that the bulk of the class time can be devoted to discussion.

Discussion

Use the questionnaire results to get the students talking about how aggression is defined. You might begin with those items for which there is greater agreement and proceed to those on which the class is evenly divided. Note that the 25 statements are quite diverse and are intended to span the gamut of issues related to aggression: harm to living versus nonliving things (statements 9 and 23), accident versus intention (8 and 21), actual damage versus no physical damage (10, 13, and 18), self-defense (3, 13, and 14), duty or job responsibility (3, 4, 19, 20, and 22), predation and instinctual behavior

(1, 2, and 25), survival (1, 6, and 16), acts involving animals other than humans (7, 16, 17, and 18), covert acts (11 and 14), inaction (12 and 15), self-injury (24), and killing for sport (17 and 25).

Help students grasp these issues by grouping the related items in the discussion. For example, statements 16 and 17 make an interesting comparison. The latter is more often viewed as aggressive, and a similar pattern emerges in statements 1 and 25. In both pairs, students distinguish between killing for food and killing for sport. Many will argue that food seeking justifies the act and would not label it aggression. Debate on these items and many others is typically lively, and opposing viewpoints are common. If alternative views are not forthcoming on some issues, you may wish to play the role of devil's advocate.

If there is time, or in a separate lecture in the next class period, you can present some of the definitions of aggression proposed by psychologists.

Consider the following examples:

1. "Behavior intended to hurt another person" (Freedman, 1982, p. 259).
2. "Any behavior whose intent is to inflict harm or injury on another living being" (McGee & Wilson, 1984, p. 503).
3. "Hostile or forceful action intended to dominate or violate" (Lefrançois, 1982, p. 596).
4. "Behavior that is intended to injure another person (physically or verbally) or to destroy property" (Atkinson, Atkinson, & Hilgard, 1983, p. 321).
5. "A response that delivers noxious stimuli to another organism" (Buss, 1961, p. 3).

The first four definitions require intent, but the last one does not. The first one limits aggression to humans, whereas the second and fifth broaden it to include all living organisms. But what about kicking wastebaskets and smashing tennis rackets? That could be considered aggressive under the fourth definition. All definitions talk about behaviors, actions, or responses but are unclear as to whether inaction can be aggressive or not. Providing these definitions to students helps them to understand that, like themselves, psychologists also have some difficulty in agreeing on what does or does not constitute aggression.

Students in my class consistently have rated this activity high in terms of satisfaction and as an exercise in learning. Written comments indicate that a number of them believe that it serves to sharpen their critical thinking skills. A few miss the point and want to be told the "real" definition of aggression after the exercise is over, but that kind of reaction is quite rare.

You can use this exercise as a basis for discussion or as a lecture on the causes of aggression. Questions for discussion include the following: Is aggression instinctual? Is aggression a natural reaction to conditions such as frustration, conflict, and pain? Is aggression learned, and if so, how and from what sources? This last question presents a good opportunity to discuss aggression in the media, particularly television, and what effect it may have on the behavior of viewers (see Liebert, Sprafkin, & Davidson, 1982). Other topics of interest include aggression in athletics, competitiveness versus aggressiveness, assertiveness versus aggressiveness, the positive role of aggression, violent crime, the relation of prejudice to aggression, and methods for the control of aggression.

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Adapted From

Benjamin, L. T. (1985). Defining aggression: An exercise for classroom discussion. *Teaching of Psychology, 12,* 40-42. Used with permission of Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

From

Benjamin, L. T., Jr. (1987). Defining aggression. In *Activities handbook for the teaching of psychology* (Vol. 2). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Aggression Questionnaire

1. A spider eats a fly.

2. Two wolves fight for the leadership of the pack.

3. A soldier shoots an enemy at the front line.

4. The warden of a prison executes a convicted criminal.

5. The juvenile gang attacks members of another gang.

6 Two men fight for a piece of bread.

7. A man viciously kicks a cat.

8. A man, while cleaning a window, knocks over a flowerpot, which, in falling, injures a pedestrian.

9. A girl kicks a wastebasket.

10. Mr. X, a notorious gossip, speaks disparagingly of many people of his acquaintance.

11. A man mentally rehearses a murder he is about to commit.

12. An angry son purposely fails to write to his mother, who is expecting a letter and will be hurt if none arrives.

13. An enraged boy tries with all his might to inflict injury on his antagonist, a bigger boy, but is not successful in doing so. His efforts simply amuse the bigger boy.

14. A man daydreams of harming his antagonist, but has no hope of doing so.

15. A senator does not protest the escalation of bombing to which he is morally opposed.

16. A farmer beheads a chicken and prepares it for supper.

17. A hunter kills an animal and mounts it as a trophy.

18. A dog snarls at a mail carrier, but does not bite.

19. A physician gives a flu shot to a screaming child.

20. A boxer gives his opponent a bloody nose.

21. A Girl Scout tries to assist an elderly woman but trips her by accident.

22. A bank robber is shot in the back while trying to escape.

23. A tennis player smashes his racket after missing a volley.

24. A person commits suicide.

25. A cat kills a mouse, parades around with it, and then discards it.

Adapted From

Johnson (1972), Kaufmann (1970), and Krech, Crutchfield, Livson, Wilson, and Parducci (1982); full citations are listed under Activity 6.1 References.

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Activity 6.2

Violence and the Media

Psychological research has found that long-term exposure to media violence is associated with aggressive behavior. One study, for example, found that the more aggressive adults were ones who, as children, had watched more violence on television and identified more strongly with the aggressive characters.

Do you think you are exposed to a little or a lot of media violence? Over the next week, watch at least three television programs and record each instance of aggression that occurs in each program, using the table below. Pick three different types of programs to watch (i.e., cartoons, dramas, sitcoms, news, sporting events), with at least one program being one that you watch somewhat regularly. Look for examples of hostile aggression (i.e., acts motivated by anger, frustration, and hatred and intended to harm another), instrumental aggression (i.e., aggressive acts motivated by goals other than to directly hurt the target), physical aggression, relational aggression (i.e., acts to harm another's peer relationships), and displaced aggression (i.e., acts aimed at someone or something that was not the source of the frustration).

Name of program	**Type of program** (e.g., cartoons, dramas, sitcoms, news, sporting events)	**Length of program** (i.e., 30 minutes, 1 hour)	**Number of aggressive acts**	**Examples of aggressive acts**

Questions

1. Do the number and type of the aggressive acts vary by the type of program? What type of program do you think might have the most negative impact on viewers' aggressive behavior? Why?

2. Ask a few friends to predict how many aggressive acts occur during a particular show or time period on television. Are their predictions accurate? Too high or too low? How might you explain these results?

From

Breckler, S., Olson, J., & Wiggins, E. (2006). *Social psychology alive: The workbook* (1st ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth Publishers.

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Social Psychology

A Unit Lesson Plan for High School Psychology Teachers

Activity 7.1

The Lonely Hearts Club

Allyson J. Weseley, EdD
Roslyn High School, Roslyn, NY

Concept

The handout on page 74 is a quick, easy, and entertaining way to elicit a discussion of the role of similarity and proximity in attraction. After reading about the common factors that promote attraction, most students pair the "Shy and Single" person and the "Alone in the City that Never Sleeps" person. There is, of course, no completely correct answer, but that pair is the only one in which both are similar and in close proximity to each another.

This exercise also generally raises questions about gender stereotypes. Many students are unable to discuss the possible pairings without lapsing into the use of gendered pronouns. For instance, students almost always believe that the carpenter is a man and the secretary is a woman. The business executive creates an interesting discussion, as the person has a traditionally masculine job but expresses several feminine interests.

The Lonely Hearts Club

Instructions

Read each personal ad, and, using your knowledge of psychology, determine which two people will be most likely to become involved and why.

Shy and Single—Long Island, Jewish, professional (32) seeks long-term relationship. I enjoy music (folk and rock), the outdoors, reading, and sushi.

Come Build a Future With Me—Suburban, Chicago, carpenter looking for a companion (25-35) for friendship and more. Favorite activities include concerts, dining, and athletics.

Alone in the City That Never Sleeps—Manhattan business executive ready to settle down. I love pets and children and like to travel, go to movies, and read.

Life of the Party Seeks Partner—Single secretary in San Francisco looking for life partner. I am ambitious, vivacious, and delicious. I enjoy jogging, yoga, and creative pursuits.

Activity 7.2

Romantic Relationships: Studying Theories of Personal Relationship Development

Elizabeth L. Paul
The College of New Jersey

Concept

The personal relationships field has developed over the past 3 decades into a thriving discipline. To introduce students to the subject matter, this activity requires each student to create her or his own theory of how romantic relationships develop. Students' theories are then used as the basis for a discussion about the psychological study of interpersonal relationships.

Materials

You will need a chalkboard or white board and, of course, creative students.

Instructions

This activity must take place before students have been introduced to the personal relationships field in an introductory course or at the beginning of a personal relationships course. This way students are not biased by existing scholarly work in this area. One week prior to the introduction of this field, instruct students to create a theory of how romantic relationships develop and proceed. They may list and describe stages, draw a flow diagram, or identify general processes that occur. There is no limit to the creativity with which this assignment is completed (I have received collages, cartoons, and yard-long flow diagrams). Tell students that they must not consult their textbooks or any other scholarly materials for this assignment; however, encourage them to consult with friends. Students should bring their one- or two-page presentations of the theory to the next class period. (Alternatively, students may work in groups in class to develop theories. This is less effective than the take-home assignment but is still an effective discussion tool.) Students do not receive a specific grade for their theory papers; rather, they receive credit toward their class participation grade.

In class, ask five students to volunteer to write an abbreviated version of their theories on the board (if the students have easy and quick access to a copy machine, they could put their diagrams or illustrations on overheads to show the class; this may be especially effective in a large lecture class). By walking around the classroom before class starts and identifying promising and diverse student papers, you could encourage particular students to volunteer. Ask the volunteers to give a brief explanation of their theories to the class. Then encourage the students to discuss the theories as a class.

This exercise has been found to be very effective in seminar-style classes as well as large lecture classes. The following are suggestions for facilitating this exercise in a large lecture course: (a) have student volunteers write their theory on an overhead transparency to aid in presentation ease and clarity; (b) have students hand in their theories ahead of time, which will allow you to select five examples to copy onto transparencies and present; and (c) have students cluster in small groups to begin the discussion of their theories, assigning one student per group to be the recorder of issues raised by their group that can be used to facilitate contributions to the large group discussion to follow.

After the discussion, give students 5 minutes in class to comment in writing about how their ideas of relationship development changed as a result of the class discussion.

Variations

The following are two additional variations of the exercise suitable for any class format (e.g., seminar, lecture):

1. Have half of the students develop models of one type of relationship while other students develop models of another type. Possible relationship type comparisons include (a) close platonic friendships with romantic relationships, (b) cross-sex friendships with cross-sex romantic relationships, (c) same-sex friendships with cross-sex friendships, (d) same-sex romantic relationships with cross-sex romantic relationships, and (e) same-sex friendships with same-sex romantic relationships. In the class discussion, examine relationship-type differences and similarities. Discuss possible causes of relationship-type differences.

2. As a follow-up to the relationship development theory exercise, review major scholarly theories of relationship development with students. It is important to include Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love in the lecture material. Then, divide the class into small work groups and assign a scholarly theory to each group. Select one student's relationship development theory and instruct each group to revise this personal theory, tailoring it to their specific assigned scholarly theoretical orientation (e.g., social penetration or social exchange theory). Have a member of each group record the group's revision on an overhead transparency or on the chalkboard. In the discussion that follows, compare and contrast the different theory revisions. Explore the strengths and weaknesses of each scholarly model. Looking across all the different scholarly theories, what is understood about relationship development and what questions are left unanswered?

Discussion

Most students initially greet this assignment with excitement, thinking that it is easy. Once they start developing their own theories, they realize that this is quite a challenging task. They begin to recognize the many variables involved and the many variations such factors create. Use this new awareness of the complexity of interpersonal relating to expose students to the vast terrain of the personal relationships field. The five volunteers usually present varied theories; there will be similarities, disagreements, and unique ideas. The following are suggestions for guiding the discussion:

1. Begin the discussion by asking the class to comment on the five theories. Compare and contrast the theories. What are the features with which students agree or disagree?

2. Are the theories realistic portrayals of how romantic relationships develop and proceed? Or are they idealized and romanticized? How do the idealized theories reflect societal myths or fantasies (i.e., social scripts) about romantic relating (emphasis on passionate love, "conflict phobia," living "happily ever after")? What is the function of such social scripts? How do social scripts affect interpersonal relationships?

3. What interpersonal processes or qualities are reflected in the theories (e.g., attraction, trust, honesty, commitment)? Are they described in any detail, or are they simply listed as unreflective or automatic responses? What is the function of such glib responses? In what order do various interpersonal processes or qualities occur in theories? For example, when does sexual interaction (if noted) occur? When does commitment occur? Many theories reflect a very fast-paced sequence in which sexual interaction and commitment come directly after attraction and meeting the partner. Discuss such sequences in the context of the current social and sexual climate. How does such sequencing affect the later course of a relationship?

4. What interpersonal processes or qualities are absent from students' theories? Students often do not include communication (other than superficial chatting), conflict and the negotiation of conflict resolution strategies, relationship cognition (including active decision making about the course of the relationship or future planning), or relationship-maintenance strategies (most theories end with engagement or marriage without thought to processes or qualities necessary for maintaining a long-term relationship). Many theories do not include sexual interaction. Discuss with students their hesitation about including sexual interaction, societal taboos about direct communication about sexual interaction, and how such factors affect romantic relationships. For example, could such reticence be the root of sexual conflict or unwanted sexual activities in relationships?

5. What is the function of a theory in a field such as personal relationships? For decades, scholars have tried to develop models of how relationships develop and proceed. Identify the scholarly models most closely represented by students' theories (social penetration, social exchange, attraction based, and individual developmental). In what ways could such models be useful for research and application? Should a relationship development model be an idealized model to which we should strive or a realistic model detailing the difficulties that often arise?

6. Explore individual differences in personal relationship development theories. For example, are there sex or race differences among students' theories? Is a universal model of romantic relationship development and progress possible? Is it useful? Should theories vary by age, cohort, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and race, health, socioeconomic status, geographic region within the United States, or nationality? How? Have scholarly theories considered such variation? How inclusive has personal relationships theory and research been?

Writing Component

As noted earlier, this activity includes a two-stage writing component. First, students write creatively about romantic relationship development and, second, they are given a 5-minute in-class reflection period during which they note in writing how their ideas about romantic relationship development have changed as a result of the class exercise. These short reaction papers can trigger further class discussion. They may also be collected for instructor commentary.

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Discussion Questions

Each discussion question can be used to integrate topics within all facets of the Social Psychology chapter.

1. Discuss the explanations that are often given for individuals who receive government aid. How does this fit into the fundamental attribution error? Counter this with an explanation of why high school students might explain their own dependence on their parents for funding.

2. How can you apply what you have learned about social dilemmas to help to explain why participants on the show "Survivor" decide either to cooperate or compete with one another?

3. Explain why stereotypes develop. How do stereotypes lead to prejudice and discrimination? What are some methods social psychologists might suggest for becoming less dependent on stereotypes?

4. How would the information that social psychologists study help explain the events of September 11, 2001? How can psychologists promote more prosocial behavior?

5. Explain how marketers and advertisers attempt to influence consumers' habits by using methods of persuasion such as foot-in-the-door, door-in-the face, and the central and peripheral routes to persuasion and obedience to authority figures.

6. Explain and cite specific examples of how culture can influence an individual's exhibited aggressiveness.

7. Explain how the following terms may or may not have contributed to the undeniable attraction between Cinderella and Prince Charming: proximity, similarity, attractiveness, and familiarity.

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Useful Cross-Cultural Resources for Instructors

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Web Sites

Adults and Children Together Against Violence
http://actagainstviolence.apa.org/

American Psychological Association Science Directorate
http://www.apa.org/science/careers.html (Careers in Psychology)
http://www.apa.org/science/nonacad_careers.html (Non-Academic Careers)

American Psychological Association Special Topics
http://www.apa.org/topics/
For information on *Bullying, Kids & the Media, Race, Violence, and Men & Women*

Online Psychology Laboratory
http://opl.apa.org (First Impressions Activity)

Society for Personality and Social Psychology
http://www.spsp.org/index.html

Social Psychology Network
http://www.socialpsychology.org/
http://www.socialpsychology.org/teaching.htm (Teaching Resources)
http://www.socialpsychology.org/career.htm (Online Psychology Career Center)

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